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Economic and environmental questions

Social and human rights questions

Consolidated report on the work of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council in 2005

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is aimed at assisting the Economic and Social Council in providing policy guidance to its functional commissions and in harmonizing their work. It gives an overview of the issues addressed by the commissions and highlights their contribution towards the implementation of a comprehensive framework for development originating from the Millennium Declaration and the goals embodied in the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits. In that regard, it contains a number of recommendations for consideration by the Council. On an exceptional basis, this year's report covers the work of the functional commissions since the Millennium Summit so as to provide a more dynamic and representative picture of the issues addressed by them.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted in response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2004/63 as well as earlier resolutions of the General Assembly and the Council.[1] The Council requested in that resolution that the Secretary-General submit to the general segment a consolidated report on the work of the functional commissions in 2005 focusing on the substantive aspects of their activities, so as to complement the report on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B. The General Assembly in its resolution 57/270 B emphasized the need to make better use of this report and dedicate more time for its review.

2. On an exceptional basis, this year's report covers the work of the functional commissions since the Millennium Summit so as to provide a more dynamic and representative picture of the issues addressed by the commissions. It highlights the work of the commissions and their key role in the development and implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration. The report is aimed at not only informing the Council but also contributing to its efforts to ensure that development issues figure effectively in the outcome of the September Summit.

3. Like the previous consolidated reports, the present report is, of necessity, of a selective nature, focusing on a limited number of activities chosen with a view to facilitate the Council's coordinating and guiding role on major common themes. The report should be read in conjunction with the reports of the functional commissions, as well as with the report of the Secretary-General to the high-level and coordination segments of the Council (E/2005/56) and the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolutions 50/227, 52/12 B and 57/270 B (E/2005/61).

4. The report provides an overview of the work of the functional commissions, identifying the main focus of their work programmes, priority topics and main outcomes, as well as major system-wide events and thematic linkages and complementarities among their activities.

II. Contributions of the functional commissions towards the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration

5. In the past, the consolidated report analysed selected themes considered by the functional commissions during the previous session. Building on those analyses, this year's report covers the period from 2001 to 2005. For reporting purposes, the analysis is organized in individual sections largely using the common themes that have emanated from the Millennium Declaration and the goals embodied in the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits as a guide to help to identify cross-cutting policy issues. That provides a way for the Council to deal with the outcomes of its functional commissions systematically.

6. The report covers the work of all nine commissions of the Council. The related work of the United Nations Forum on Forests and United Nations Forum on

Indigenous Issues is also included. The principal thematic focus of the work of individual functional commissions is presented in a conference room paper,[2] together with selected major events, such as the thematic special sessions of the General Assembly, to illustrate the linkages between the work programme of the commissions and those major United Nations meetings.

7. As requested by the Council, several functional commissions have developed multi-year programmes of work, selecting specific themes and addressing them from an integrated perspective. While the growing use of such programmes by individual functional commissions is facilitating collaboration and coherence among them, **the Council could consider ways to bring more predictability and certainty to its own programme of work**. That would enable the functional commissions to better prepare their contributions to the work of the Council from their own perspectives. They could also draw from the Council's work on common themes in their own debates.

8. It is envisaged that the high-level segment may endorse the common themes that have originated from the major United Nations conferences and summits to serve as a basis for the integrated implementation of the conference outcomes. Such common themes could also serve to orient the Council's contribution and its interaction with its functional commissions and be a source for the identification of themes for their multi-year work programmes, and, to the extent possible, introduce some thematic unity across them. **To facilitate early preparations, the Council could consider the following options: (a) embrace the common themes as a basis for its coordination segment work programme leading to 2015; (b) complete the work on its four-year multi-year work programme of its coordination segment on the basis of the common themes; or (c) select an indicative list of common themes from which the Council could choose its coordination segment theme on an annual basis.** Any of those options would help the Council and its commissions to introduce some thematic unity into their work programmes and enable them periodically to undertake more comprehensive reviews of the implementation of specific conferences or of progress around a common theme.

Recommendations

9. **The Council has received a broad range of policy inputs from its commissions as a contribution to its substantive session in 2005. It should invite the commissions to continue to provide concise, action-oriented input to its substantive session in 2006.**

10. **The Council is likely to focus on monitoring the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration. In that context, in addition to their own work programmes, the functional commissions could be encouraged to provide inputs in a systematic way to the Council's assessment of progress towards agreed development goals.**

11. **With regard to the Council's oversight and management function, the outcomes of the functional commissions should continue to be considered on the basis of a consolidated report. The Council may wish to give guidance on whether the report should follow a thematic approach focusing on one to two specific common themes each year.**

12. **The Council may wish to explore further avenues to promote greater harmony and thematic unity, including through the conclusion of a multi-year programme and/or an indicative list of common themes.**

A. Eradicating poverty, hunger and malnutrition

13. Since the Millennium Summit, eradication of poverty and hunger has taken on new urgency in the work of the functional commissions in the light of the quantitative targets of the Millennium Declaration to halve, by 2015, the proportion of the world's people living in extreme poverty and hunger. While that cross-cutting priority theme was addressed by most of the commissions over the past five years, the outcomes of particularly the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Commission on Human Rights provided the Council with a broad range of policy inputs.

14. The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Summit for Social Development emphasized eradication of poverty as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative. The eradication of poverty was also the first priority theme addressed by the Commission after the Social Summit, in 1996. In 2000, at the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly, Member States called for putting poverty eradication at the centre of economic and social development and reducing by half the proportion of people living in extreme poverty by 2015. That Commitment was further embodied in the Millennium Declaration. The declaration that was adopted in 2005 at the forty-third session of the Commission for Social Development urged that the people-centred approach to development envisioned in the Copenhagen Declaration be restored and called for policies to link the efforts of poverty eradication to the fostering of social integration and to the promotion of employment strategies. Of particular importance was the call for the issues of employment and social integration to be injected into the Millennium Development Goals in order to broaden the concept of poverty eradication. The Commission requested that its Declaration be transmitted to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly, through the Council, as a contribution to the review of the Millennium Declaration.

15. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its forty-sixth session, in 2002, identified gender equality and the empowerment of women as critical factors in the eradication of poverty. It requested relevant stakeholders to ensure that all actions to achieve the poverty eradication goals established in the Millennium Declaration include the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle.

16. The Commission on Human Rights annually addressed the human rights dimension of poverty, including as they relate to extreme poverty, the right to food, and the enjoyment of the whole range of human rights in general. In several of those areas, it appointed Special Rapporteurs and independent experts to provide input to its discussions on those issues.

17. The Commission on Population and Development, the Commission on Sustainable Development, the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice addressed eradication of poverty and hunger as an integral part of their deliberations. For example, the

Commission on Population and Development helped to advance international understanding of emerging population trends and their implications for eradication of poverty. The relationship between population, HIV/AIDS and poverty was addressed by the Commission at its thirty-eighth session. The relationship between poverty and sustainable development was addressed by the Commission on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Forum on Forests. This year, the Commission on Sustainable Development adopted a policy decision on practical measures to expedite progress in meeting the Millennium Development Goals and targets, as well as the Johannesburg commitments relating to water, sanitation and human settlements and requested it to be submitted through the Economic and Social Council as a contribution to the High-level Plenary Meeting of the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

18. Reviewing the outcomes of the functional commissions, linkages and complementarities can be seen in the different approaches of individual commissions to their dealing with eradication of poverty and hunger. Those outcomes will contribute to the high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council and help in shaping its ministerial declaration. **A related issue is to ensure that the outcomes of the commissions have an impact on the Millennium Declaration review in September 2005 given that the General Assembly will be receiving many contributions from different forums.**

B. Advancing education and literacy

19. Advancement of education and literacy was another policy focus in the work of the commissions during the reporting period. Beginning with the World Conference on Education for All in 1990, the World Education Forum and the Millennium Summit in 2000, the international community has explicitly recognized that education, especially primary schooling, is critical for achieving social and demographic progress, sustained economic development and gender equality. The Economic and Social Council Ministerial Declaration of 2002 reaffirmed the commitment to mobilize political will and resources for the Education for All initiative.

20. The Commission on Human Rights called for a range of measures to give effect to the right to education. At its sixtieth session, in 2004, the Commission, for the first time, linked the realization of the right to education with the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. At its sixty-first session, in 2005, the Commission gave detailed guidance to its Special Rapporteur on the right to education, and encouraged collaboration between the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization to strengthen monitoring and promoting it.

21. This year, in its 10-year review of Copenhagen, the Commission on Social Development reaffirmed the importance of promoting and attaining the goals of universal and equitable access to quality education as part of the effort to eradicate poverty, promote full and productive employment and foster social integration. In its 10-year review of Beijing, the Commission on the Status of Women emphasized that educating poor women as well as men can reduce poverty, and called upon women's equal participation in education at all levels.

22. At its thirty-sixth session, in 2003, the Commission on Population and Development addressed "Population, education and development" as its priority theme. It reaffirmed the right to education and the importance of improving educational quality and opportunities, especially for girls, and emphasized the interrelationship between education and international migration. The Commission requested the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs to continue its research, and the United Nations Population Fund to continue its programming on the linkages between population factors and the attainment of the goals of Education for All.

23. The fourth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, in 2004, provided an interesting perspective on the linkages between education and sustainable management of forests. In many cases, tree products require less labour than industrial products, thus freeing children to attend school. It was also observed that incorporation of instruction on tree cultivation in primary education may provide an incentive for greater school enrolment, thus contributing to the realization of Millennium Development Goal 2. At its first session, in 2002, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues stressed the importance of respect for and protection of traditional indigenous knowledge and heritage. In 2004, at its third session, it addressed Goal 2 under the thematic approaches of language, cultural perspectives and traditional knowledge, underscoring the importance of Goal 2 for indigenous women and girls. To that end, Member States should consider the adoption and full implementation of comprehensive national indigenous education policies. The Commission on Crime Prevention emphasized the use of education and public awareness strategies to foster a culture of lawfulness and tolerance while respecting cultural identities.

Recommendation

24. **In the area of advancing education and literacy, the Council should encourage a further deepening of collaboration among its commissions, in particular the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Population and Development and the Commission on Sustainable Development. The Council may encourage the Special Rapporteur on the right to education, in preparing his report for the sixty-second session of the Commission on Human Rights, to take into account the work of the General Assembly, the Council and its commissions concerning this topic.**

C. Providing health services, preventing disease and reducing mortality

25. Another major policy focus in the work of the commissions related to health services, preventing disease and reducing mortality. Their work contributed to help to ensure that the HIV/AIDS pandemic would receive the urgent and continuous attention of the international community, which was called for at the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly, in June 2001, and the personal priority accorded to that challenge by the Secretary-General. A high-level meeting of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, held in June 2005, conducted an interim review of the goals set out in the Declaration of Commitment adopted by the Assembly in 2001 and provided input to the September Summit in that area.

26. The Commission on Population and Development reviewed issues of reproductive health and the demographic implications of the HIV/AIDS pandemic. Those issues were discussed at its thirty-fifth session, in 2002, under the theme "Reproductive rights and reproductive health, with special reference to HIV/AIDS", and again at its thirty-eighth session, in 2005, under the theme "Population, development and HIV/AIDS, with particular emphasis on poverty". At the latter session, the Commission adopted a major resolution stressing the essential contribution of full implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, and emphasized the importance of integrating the goal of universal access to reproductive health into development strategies.

27. The Commission on Human Rights reaffirmed the right to enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health and in 2002 appointed a Special Rapporteur whose mandate has been to focus on that right. It dealt with the protection of human rights in the context of HIV/AIDS, covering issues such as prevention, access to treatment and care, and the prohibition of HIV-related discrimination, as well as the debt problem of those developing countries particularly affected by HIV/AIDS. At its sixty-first session, in 2005, the Commission called upon all States to implement in full the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted at the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, in 2001, and requested the Secretary-General to invite Member States and the United Nations organs to integrate HIV-related human rights into their policies and programmes.

28. The Commission on the Status of Women addressed "Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS" as a priority theme of its forty-fifth session, in 2001. In its agreed conclusions, it recommended actions aimed at the empowerment of women, prevention, treatment, care and support and creating an enabling environment for regional and international cooperation. It also paid attention to the issue in its resolutions 47/1 and 48/2 and in its agreed conclusions of its forty-eighth session, in 2004, on the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality.

29. The connection between health and sustainable development was highlighted in the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development. For example, in 2002, the Commission, acting as the preparatory committee for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, pointed to HIV/AIDS in Africa as one of the main areas of concern for the effective implementation of Agenda 21.

30. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs, at its forty-eighth session, in 2005, paid special attention to HIV/AIDS, with a thematic debate on drug abuse prevention, treatment and rehabilitation. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, at its thirteenth session, in 2004, expressed concern about the potential role of prisons as multipliers or "incubators" of the HIV/AIDS epidemic.

31. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, at its first session, in 2002, noted the significance of incorporating indigenous understanding of the human body, the causes of health and illness and existing practices of treatment of women and men for the development of policies and guidelines on health care. The significance of trees to the achievement of health-related Millennium Development Goals was noted at the fourth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests, which highlighted the role of certain tree species as an important source of medicinal

products in rural communities that have limited access to expansive modern processed drugs.

Recommendation

32. The Council should welcome the special attention given by the Commissions on Population and Development, the Status of Women and Human Rights to the issue of HIV/AIDS; invite them to deepen their collaboration in that area; and encourage other commissions to more effectively address the relevant aspects of the issue in their work programmes.

33. The Council could invite its commissions and their secretariats to clearly identify the operational implications of their work and bring them to the attention of the governing bodies of the United Nations funds and programmes for their consideration and guidance on their work on HIV/AIDS.

34. Overall, the Council could consider ways of promoting closer and more effective interaction between the work of the functional commissions and that of the governing bodies of funds and programmes and of ensuring that they draw, as appropriate, on relevant policy guidance from the commissions.

D. Promoting employment

35. In commitment 3, the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action on social development laid down the objective of promoting the goal of full employment as a basic priority of economic and social policies. For its part, the Millennium Declaration called for strategies that give young people a real chance to find decent and productive work.

36. The Commission for Social Development, at its forty-first session, in 2003, under its priority theme, "National and international cooperation for social development", considered the impact of employment strategies on social development. It called upon development partners to give adequate attention to productive and sustainable employment in their development policies. The commitment to the promotion of full, freely chosen, decent and productive employment as a fundamental component of any development strategy was renewed at its forty-third session, in 2005, in the 10-year review of the Copenhagen commitments.

37. Other commissions addressed employment as part of their main themes. For instance, the United Nations Forum on Forests noted that sustainable forest management programmes could benefit local workers through direct employment opportunities with decent and safe working conditions. At its third session, in 2004, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues recommended that Governments include in their employment policies actions that directly benefit indigenous women.

Recommendation

38. The Council may wish to devote one of its coordination sessions on the issue of employment and the realization of development goals. That would also examine the ways functional commissions are integrating that aspect in their work.

E. Achieving social integration and addressing vulnerabilities of social groups

39. Social integration and vulnerabilities of social groups were addressed by most commissions, albeit often at the margin and within their sectoral perspectives. The Commission on Social Development, as the entity primarily responsible for the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit on Social Development as well as the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, extensively addressed the issues of social integration and vulnerabilities with particular reference to youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and the family. In a declaration adopted at the forty-third session of the Commission for Social Development, in 2005, Governments urged that social integration be injected into the Millennium Development Goals to broaden the concept of poverty eradication.

40. The Commission on Population and Development, the Commission on Sustainable Development, the Commission on Human Rights, the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the United Nations Forum on Forests, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice also paid attention to issues relating to youth, older persons, persons with disabilities, the family, and indigenous people as part of the deliberations on their main themes. For example, recognizing that children who are victims and witnesses of crime are particularly vulnerable and need special protection, assistance and support, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, at its fourteenth session, in 2005, adopted the "Guidelines on justice in matters involving child victims and witnesses of crime" as a framework to enhance the protection of child victims and witnesses.

Recommendation

41. **The Council should stimulate substantive exchanges among its functional commissions to promote the social integration component of social development and help "mainstream the concept of social integration". In the same context, the Council could urge its commissions in their work to take into account the needs and concerns of the vulnerable groups.**

F. Ensuring environmental sustainability and managing the natural resource base for development

42. With a view to protecting the common environment, the Millennium Declaration resolved to adopt a new ethic of conservation and stewardship. Millennium Development Goal 7 ("Ensuring environmental sustainability") includes as targets the integration of the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes, reversal of the loss of environmental resources, reduction by halving the proportion of people without sustainable access to safe drinking water, and achieving significant improvement in lives of at least 100 million slum-dwellers, by 2020. These were reaffirmed in the outcomes of the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation.

43. While the Commission on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Forum on Forests paid attention to environmental sustainability and natural resource

base management systematically and as an integral part of their mandates,[2] several commissions specifically chose themes to make contributions to Goal 7. At its thirty-fourth session in 2001, the Commission on Population and Development addressed "Population, environment and development". The Commission on the Status of Women addressed "Environmental management and mitigation of natural disasters: a gender perspective" as a priority theme at its forty-sixth session in 2002. It is the first negotiated outcome at the intergovernmental level that comprehensively addresses from a gender perspective environmental management and natural disasters. The Commission on Human Rights adopted annually a resolution on human rights and the environment as part of sustainable development. In resolution 2005/60, the Commission paid attention to activities relating to human rights and the environment in the context of poverty eradication and post-conflict situations. The Commission for Social Development in its 10-year review of the Social Summit, in 2005, addressed the integration of social and economic policy, thus contributing relevant analyses and recommendations on key dimensions of the sustainable development problematique.

44. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs at its forty-eighth session, in 2005, called for a comprehensive approach, integrating alternative development programmes, including preventive alternative development, into wider economic and social development programmes including: (a) environmental conservation and the recuperation of degraded ecosystems; (b) access to financial mechanisms and microcredits; (c) access to land ownership; and (d) capacity-building of local communities, institutions and authorities.

45. While the functional commissions addressed diverse elements directly relevant to policy development in furthering the achievement of the overall goal of environmental sustainability, the environmental dimension could be more effectively integrated into the work of relevant commissions. Building on the work of the Commission on Sustainable Development, **the Council could urge its commissions to mainstream the concept of sustainable development in their work and encourage Governments and the United Nations system to fully integrate environment and natural resource management in broader national priorities and development planning processes, including poverty reduction strategies. It could also encourage the exchange of views by the Commission for Social Development, the Commission on Sustainable Development and the United Nations Forum on Forests on the issue of integrating social and environmental objectives.**

G. Promoting democracy, good governance and human rights

46. Public participation, accountability and transparency, supported by effective institutions are crucial elements of good governance. All functional commissions, notably the Commission on Human Rights, stressed the importance of democracy, human rights, law enforcement and good governance as central in the process of development. Close links were maintained between several commissions. In particular, the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women collaborated extensively with the aim of mainstreaming women's human rights. Similarly, the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues met with the Special Rapporteurs of the Commission on Human Rights on the human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples and on violence against women, its

causes and consequences and with the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women. Those forms of collaboration continued to promote a valuable synergy between functional commissions in that area.

47. Organized crime, corruption and terrorism were identified by the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, at its thirteenth session, in 2004, as threats to security and development. The fight against corruption was seen as a prerequisite to establishing the rule of law and good governance and to creating the necessary thrust of the people in their institutions and representatives. During the senior-level discussion on progress made with regard to the criminal justice aspects of terrorism and international cooperation, terrorism was defined as one of the most serious threats to freedom, democracy and human rights and a major source of destabilization for States, which could only be defeated with the active participation of all States and regional organizations. The Commission emphasized the importance of international cooperation in the fight against terrorism and other forms of criminal behaviour.

H. Addressing challenges of countries with special needs

48. United Nations conferences from Rio to Johannesburg and Monterrey, and, more specifically, Barbados and Brussels, have sought to bring special focus on Africa, the least developed, landlocked developing and small island developing countries. Further, the Millennium Declaration addressed the special needs of those countries, and democracy in Africa. Most commissions extended support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and addressed the challenges of all countries with special needs during the five-year span providing policy inputs for the Council and, recently, to the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States held in Mauritius in January 2005. For instance, the Commission on Human Rights sought to bring special attention to the unequal distribution of the benefits of globalization and the increasing marginalization of the least developed and African countries.

I. Making macroeconomic policies work for sustained employment generating economic growth

49. Commitment 1 of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action called for the creation of an economic, political, social, cultural and legal environment to promote social development.

50. Similarly, at its twenty-fourth special session, the General Assembly recognized the importance of a favourable economic environment for social development putting forward precise recommendations on the generation of additional resources, efficient and equitable tax regimes and a stable international financial system.

51. Although the Commission for Social Development never took the first commitment of the Copenhagen Summit as its priority theme, it did insist from the beginning of its follow-up process to the Summit on the crucial role of appropriate economic policies. A significant outcome was achieved in 2002 with the adoption of

agreed conclusions on the question of integration of economic and social policies. Similarly, in 2003 and 2004, under consideration of its priority themes, the Commission adopted important resolutions on cooperation for the implementation of the social objectives of NEPAD. It invited the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council to continue to include consideration of the integration of economic and social policies as one of the thematic areas to be addressed in future debates.

52. The Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development of 2002 emphasized the need to promote the integration of the three components of sustainable development — economic development, social development and environmental protection — as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars. At its ninth session, the Commission on Sustainable Development stressed the need to create an enabling domestic environment for sustainable development through the implementation of appropriate macroeconomic, social and environmental policies. In a similar vein, the United Nations Forum on Forests urged that national forest programmes be more closely linked to macroeconomic planning and assistance strategies in developing countries, and that enabling conditions for environmentally and socially responsible investments in the forest sector be created. The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, at its third session, urged Governments to consider implementing special policies directed to employment creation for indigenous peoples, facilitating access to credit and the creation of small and medium-sized businesses.

53. During the reporting period, the Commission on Human Rights stressed the need for macroeconomic and financial policy issues to be integrated, on an equal footing and in a consistent way, with the realization of the broader social development goals, taking into account the specific characteristics, conditions and needs of debtor countries.

Recommendation

54. **The Council should emphasize the need for all Governments to place social development goals at the heart of their macroeconomic policies. In that context, the Council could also urge Governments to enhance coordination among ministries of foreign affairs, finance, development cooperation and trade in formulating economic, social and environmental policies to help to ensure greater policy coherence.**

J. Strengthening global partnership for development

55. All commissions recognized that the pursuit of development and poverty eradication required joint action. In that context, Goal 8 encompasses various elements of the global partnership for development agreed in the Monterrey Consensus and provides the necessary tools to review policies in areas of finance, governance, trade, external debt and technology.

56. Commitment 1 of the Copenhagen Summit includes the promotion of "dynamic, open, free markets". At its twenty-fourth special session, the General Assembly highlighted the importance of a favourable economic environment and additional resources for social development and requested the Commission for Social Development to take up the primary responsibility for the follow-up to and

review of its twenty-fourth special session and the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development. Although the Commission for Social Development never did take Commitment 1 of the Summit as its priority theme, it has repeatedly highlighted the crucial role of appropriate economic policies. A significant outcome was achieved in 2002 when the Commission adopted comprehensive agreed conclusions on the integration of economic and social policies. At its forty-first session, in 2003, the Commission for Social Development considered "National and international cooperation for social development" as one of its priority themes, recognizing that achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, demanded a new partnership between developed and developing countries. In 2005, the Commission again paid attention to financing for social development as part of its 10-year review of the World Summit for Social Development.

57. The Commission on Sustainable Development discussed the need for financial resources, including official development assistance (ODA) and debt relief, stressing the priority need to fulfil the financial commitments of Agenda 21. At its eleventh session, in 2003, the Commission underlined that partnerships in the context of the World Summit on Sustainable Development process and its follow-up should be developed and implemented. The crucial importance of increased market access to mobilize resources was also noted. At its twelfth session, in 2004, a broad-based appeal was made for development partners to move towards meeting all the Monterrey commitments and to target an increased amount of funding specifically for investments in water, sanitation and human settlements. It was emphasized that the partnership approach taken at Johannesburg and beyond could be a valuable and important modality to leverage additional resources for sustainable development.

58. The Commission on Human Rights emphasized annually the need to promote partnership approaches to international development cooperation and to ensure that prescriptive approaches to good governance did not impede such cooperation. The Commission also emphasized the need for new financial flows to debtor developing countries from all sources, in addition to debt relief measures that include debt cancellation, and urged creditor countries and international financial institutions to increase concessional financial assistance on favourable terms.

59. The United Nations Forum on Forests discussed the importance of finance and external donor assistance in a number of contexts and urged countries to strengthen international cooperation, including North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, on finance, trade, transfer of environmentally sound technology and capacity-building. Similarly, the Commission on Population and Development, at its thirty-eighth session, in 2005, called for increased commitment of financial resources to accelerate the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and to achieve the goals set for 2015. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, during the reporting period, repeatedly addressed the importance of improving international cooperation relating to combating and preventing crime. The Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, at its thirteenth session, in 2004, called for an open dialogue with development organizations, financial institutions and other relevant bodies to discuss how to increase the level of financial assistance with regard to rule of law issues.

60. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its forty-sixth session, dealt with the eradication of poverty, including through the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle in a globalizing world. In its agreed conclusions, the Commission addressed the issue of partnership for development with a view to empower women, eradicate poverty and mainstream the gender perspective in the ODA process. In its agreed conclusions, the Commission urged providing additional international financing and assistance to developing countries, enhancing market access for developing countries, eliminating restrictions on technology transfer, and addressing their external debt and debt-servicing problems.

61. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs highlighted in its work the need for strong international and development cooperation against the world drug problem.

Recommendation

62. **Mobilization of additional financial resources is required for funding the effective implementation of all the programmes arising from the outcomes of major conferences and summits. The Council should urge Member States to deliver on existing commitments, including the commitments made at the Monterrey Conference, as well as to promote an enabling environment for the involvement of and investment by the private sector and local communities.**

K. Promoting science and technology for development

63. Since the Millennium Summit, the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session, in March 2003, and the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, throughout the five-year span, addressed the issue of science and technology for development as their main theme. The issue was also considered by other commissions and is reflected in some of their outcome documents.

64. The Commission on Science and Technology, in 2004, concluded that many developing countries were not likely to meet the Millennium Development Goals without concerted efforts to place science and technology at the centre of national development agendas. To scale up efforts towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, the Commission identified specific actions needed to integrate science and technology in national development strategies. Recognizing the importance of networks in that context, the Commission at its eighth session launched a new network of centres of excellence in developing countries. The aim of the network is to pool existing resources and facilities to carry out joint research in areas of critical importance to developing countries, and reverse the negative impact of brain drain by generating a critical mass of researchers who can effectively address development challenges. Those recommendations in several regards built on policy conclusions that emanated from the work of the Council on information and communication technology in 2000/2001 which not only led to the creation of an organizational Information and Communication Technology Task Force, but also gave momentum to information and communication technologies for development around the globe, leading to path-breaking initiatives such as the World Summit on the Information Society.

65. The Commission on the Status of Women, at its forty-seventh session, in 2003, examined, for the first time, the role and impact of information and communication

technology on the empowerment of women as one of its main themes, with a view to providing an input to the preparatory process of the Geneva phase of the World Summit on the Information Society. The Commission urged the integration of gender perspectives in every facet of the Summit and put forward a broad series of action recommendations that aim at ensuring that ICT becomes a tool for the promotion of gender equality, for instance, through online communities and networks.

66. The Commission on Sustainable Development, at its ninth session, in 2001, addressed the need for access to and transfer of technologies in the sectoral areas dealt with at its session (i.e., atmosphere, transport, energy), and pointed to the role of technological cooperation in that regard. In the same context, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, in 2002, called for improved networks between and among universities, research institutions, government agencies and the private sector. At the twelfth session, in 2004, it was stressed that appropriate low-cost technologies were important for meeting the Millennium Development Goals and that advances in science and technology, together with technology transfer, were critical for achieving the long-term goals of sustainable development.

67. The Commission on Human Rights consistently underlined the importance of easier access for developing countries to the technology of the developed countries. It repeatedly called upon States to ensure the availability in sufficient quantities of pharmaceuticals and medical technologies, to use ICT to support education at an affordable cost, and to facilitate equal participation in, access to, and use of ICT.

68. The United Nations Forum on Forests emphasized the need to devise approaches to facilitate transfer of environmentally sound technology, traditional forest-related knowledge and research to developing countries as well as countries with economies in transition in order to support the effective implementation of sustainable forest management. At its third session, the Forum agreed on the establishment of an ad hoc expert group on finance and transfer of environmentally sound technologies to review existing initiatives and recommend new approaches.

69. The Commission on Crime Prevention highlighted the need to provide to developing countries the appropriate technical cooperation and financial support in order to enhance their ability to protect themselves from high-technology and computer-related crime.

70. The Commission on Population and Development, the Statistical Commission, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues have addressed the issue of science and technology for development mainly from the perspective of using ICT for improved data collection, exchange and processing.

Recommendations

71. **The Council should continue to encourage its commissions to support the fulfilment of the goals of the Declaration of Principles[3] and Plan of Action,[4] adopted by the World Summit on the Information Society, Geneva phase, in December 2003, contribute to the preparation of the second phase of the Summit, to be held in Tunis in November 2005, and urge the Summit at the Tunis phase to continue to integrate information and communication technologies for development (ICT4D) and a gender perspective in all aspects of its work.**

72. **Recognizing the contribution of the United Nations ICT Task Force in that area and the need to further build on such approaches, the Council may encourage multi-stakeholder approaches, including the establishment of a global multi-stakeholder network for ICT and development.**

73. **The Council should encourage Governments and the United Nations system, notably its commissions, to ensure that science and technology is incorporated in poverty reduction policies and strategies, and urge them to consider ways to strengthen linkages between public research and private industry, and tap into regional and international research and development networks.**

74. **The Council may request the functional commissions to encourage the launching of multi-stakeholder initiatives on promoting technology transfer and development in the areas of interest to developing countries.**

L. Advancing gender equality and empowering women

75. Since the Millennium Summit, the Commission on the Status of Women has addressed various aspects of gender equality and the empowerment of women through its consideration of priority themes.[2]

76. Gender equality and empowerment of women have also been addressed by several other functional commissions, including the Commission on Human Rights, the Commission on Social Development, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues. For example, the Commission on Human Rights devoted considerable attention to human rights of women and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues adopted a comprehensive body of recommendations on indigenous women during its third session, in 2004. Several commissions, especially the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, adopted resolutions on violence against women. Moreover, the United Nations human rights mechanisms, including the Commission on Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women,[5] have given increased attention to violence against women with growing regularity. Other special procedures have contributed to increased awareness of harmful traditional practices and other forms of violence against women.

77. As part of its 10-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in 2005, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted a declaration emphasizing that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and stressed the need to ensure the integration of a gender perspective in the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the review of the Millennium Declaration. The Declaration will be transmitted, through the Economic and Social Council, to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session, including to the High-level Plenary Meeting. The Commission also transmitted a note prepared by the Secretariat on the linkages between gender equality and the United Nations development agenda.

78. The Council's agreed conclusions 1997/2 and its resolution 2004/4 have been instrumental in enhancing the promotion of gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system. The Council, in its resolution 2004/4, encouraged the governing bodies of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to ensure that gender perspectives are integrated into their programmes, including those relating to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits. It recommended that the General Assembly integrate gender perspectives in its High-level Plenary Meeting in September in 2005. The Commission on the Status of Women has played a major catalytic role in that area and has adopted on an annual basis resolutions that have encouraged further mainstreaming of gender perspectives into policies and programmes. **Gender mainstreaming may be further addressed by the Council when it undertakes a review and appraisal of the implementation of its agreed conclusions 1997/2 at its future sessions before 2010, as decided in its agreed conclusions of the coordination segment in 2004.**

Recommendation

79. **The Council should encourage its subsidiary bodies to incorporate gender equality issues in their integrated and coordinated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits; encourage its commissions to pay due attention to gender perspectives when examining their methods of work and developing the themes for their multi-year programme of work; and encourage the Commission on the Status of Women to continue its catalytic role and to contribute systematically to the work of other functional commissions by providing practical guidance on gender mainstreaming.**

M. Enhancing the role of civil society and private sector for development

80. All the functional commissions emphasized the role of the private sector, public-private partnerships, multi-stakeholder approach and public participation for development as outlined in the Millennium Declaration's resolve for strong partnerships with the private sector and civil society.

81. While the Commission on Sustainable Development recommended public-private partnerships and greater private sector involvement in the sectoral areas covered during its sessions, it also noted at its twelfth session, in 2004, that private sector promotion should be based on corporate social responsibility. That issue was also taken up by the Commission for Social Development, in 2003, when it considered as its main theme "Social responsibility of the private sector", emphasizing the need to take concrete actions within the United Nations system and through the participation of all relevant stakeholders on corporate responsibility and accountability. In a similar vein, at its fifty-eighth session, the Commission on Human Rights underlined that market forces alone could not guarantee the preservation and promotion of cultural diversity, which was seen as key to sustainable human development, and from that perspective, recognized that the pre-eminence of public policy, in partnership with the private sector and civil society, must be reaffirmed.

82. The transformative potential of civil society to assist in the realization of sectoral goals and to promote the development agenda was clearly reflected in the work of the commissions. For instance, the Commission on Population and Development, at its thirty-seventh session, in 2004, emphasized the importance of building and sustaining partnerships among Governments and relevant civil society stakeholders so as to strengthen the capacity of developing countries and the key actions for the successful implementation of the Programme of Action. Similarly, the Commission on Human Rights consistently called upon States to promote the effective and wide participation of representatives of civil society in decision-making processes related to the promotion and protection of economic, social and cultural rights. The Commission on Crime Prevention underscored that efforts to promote the rule of law needed to include all stakeholders in order to create a sense of ownership, stressing that community involvement and cooperation represented important elements of the concept of crime prevention. In specific areas such as in relation to trafficking of human beings, the Commission noted that civil society had a key role to play in the prevention of the phenomenon and in assistance to victims. The United Nations Forum on Forests called for effective participation of all relevant stakeholders, including civil society and the private sector, in decision-making, implementation and practice of sustainable forest management.

N. Basic indicators related to United Nations conferences

83. Since 1998, the Council and the Statistical Commission have been engaged in a discussion of basic indicators related to recent United Nations conferences and summits. This year, the Statistical Commission took note of the work carried out by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Millennium Development Goal Indicators, notably in compiling indicators for global monitoring. It also noted that many countries still lack the capacity to produce the necessary data and that a review of indicators currently being produced at the national level was necessary for all Millennium Development Goals. The Commission requested that a report be prepared regularly, beginning at its thirty-seventh session, on the ability of countries to produce individual indicators and on how metadata should be presented to accompany indicators on all Millennium Development Goals. It agreed to form a Group of Friends of the Chair to define the modalities of the report and develop suggestions on processes that can be used to bridge the information gap between users and producers of Goal indicators and the lack of adequate data sources.

84. In addition to the Statistical Commission, a number of other commissions pursued the consideration of indicators in their respective fields. For instance, the United Nations Forum on Forests highlighted the usefulness of criteria and indicators for sustainable forest management frameworks for the development of national forest policy and planning efforts. At its fourth session, in 2004, the Forum acknowledged seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management, which were drawn from existing criteria and indicators processes and served as a reference framework for sustainable forest management. The Commission on Sustainable Development recommended further work on indicators for sustainable development by countries at the national level, including integration of gender aspects, in line with national conditions and priorities. The Commission on Science and Technology for Development, in collaboration with UNCTAD, developed ICT Development Indices, which measures ICT development, including indicators for connectivity,

access, usage and policy. **To achieve further harmonization of conference indicators, the concerned stakeholders, such as organizations in the United Nations system, and other functional commissions, should support the Statistical Commission in its designated role as the intergovernmental focal point for the review of conference indicators.**

Notes

[1] General Assembly resolutions 50/227 and 52/12 B; Economic and Social Council resolutions 1998/46, 1998/47, 1998/49, 1999/1, 1999/51 and 2001/27.

[2] See E/2005/CRP.3.

[3] See A/C.2/59/3, annex, chap. I, sect. A.

[4] Ibid., sect. B.

[5] See Commission on Human Rights resolutions 1994/45 and 2003/45.

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Economic and Social Council

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Item 14 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Social and human rights questions: advancement of women

Report of the Executive Board of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women on the work of its second session**

Summary

The Executive Board of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women held its second session at United Nations Headquarters on 1 June 2005. The agenda of the session included a review of the implementation of the programme of work during the period October 2004-May 2005; the presentation of the proposed workplan and operational budget for 2006; and consideration of matters related to fund-raising activities.

The Executive Board: took note with appreciation of the report of the Director on the implementation of the programme of work for the period October 2004-May 2005 and expressed its satisfaction with the results achieved in so few months; approved the proposed workplan and endorsed the operational budget for 2006 and agreed to consider possible recommendations to be submitted to the General Assembly regarding financial support for the Institute; agreed on the importance of seeking medium-term sustainable financial resources for INSTRAW and requested the Director of the Institute, in consultation with the United Nations Secretariat and the President of the Board, to prepare a detailed report, including actions that can be taken by the Board and proposals for alternative mechanisms for fund-raising activities; and decided to hold a resumed second session in October 2005 to analyse in more detail proposals aimed at achieving the medium- and long-term sustainability of the Institute and to consider its recommendations to be submitted to the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

* E/2005/100.

** This document was submitted late to conference services because the second session of the Executive Board was held only recently, on 1 June 2005.

05-39027 (E) 300605

I. Organization of the session

1. The session was attended by the following members of the Executive Board of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW): Burkina Faso; Czech Republic; El Salvador; Iran (Islamic Republic of); Italy; Mexico; Nigeria; Philippines; Romania and Spain.

2. Also in attendance at this session were the following ex officio members: the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs; the Director of INSTRAW; and the representative of the Dominican Republic (host country). The Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women also attended the session.

3. In accordance with article IV, rule 14, of the Rules of Procedure of the Executive Board of INSTRAW, the officers elected at the Board's first session, on 27 July 2004, continue in their functions during this second year of their terms. The officers are as follows: President: Spain; and Vice-Presidents: El Salvador (also serving as Rapporteur) and the Philippines.

Opening statements

4. The session was opened by the President of the INSTRAW Executive Board, who welcomed members to the second session. He stressed the Institute's achievements thus far in fund-raising. He also reminded members of the Board that the financial situation of the Institute remained fragile. He encouraged members of the Board to consider fresh initiatives and ways to ensure a stable financial situation of the Institute.

5. The Director of INSTRAW briefed the members of the Board on the Institute's programmes and activities and thanked them for their continued support for the Institute. She paid special tribute to the Governments of Italy, Mexico and Spain for their financial support.

Adoption of the agenda

6. The Executive Board adopted the agenda for the session.

II. Deliberations of the Executive Board

A. Progress report on the implementation of the programme of work for the period October 2004-May 2005

7. The Executive Board had before it the report on the implementation of the programme of work for the period October 2004-May 2005, which was introduced by the Director.

8. She began by informing the Board that the report had been elaborated in line with the implementation of the workplan and operational budget for 2005, approved by the Board at its resumed first session on 1 October 2004, and the strategic framework for 2004-2007.

9. Under strategic objective 1, research, the Director briefly presented some of the achievements under each of the five priority areas.

10. For migration-related issues (remittances, trafficking), the following activities were highlighted: (a) the development of a conceptual framework for gender and remittances; (b) participation in the Inter-American Development Bank seminar (28-30 June 2005) with a session on gender and remittances; (c) the preparation of project proposals for case studies in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, the Philippines and in Eastern Europe, and on groups of migrant women in Italy and Spain; and (d) the preparation of project proposals on the trafficking of women and girls in the Caribbean.

11. Activities undertaken in the area of information and communication technologies and women's empowerment included: (a) the preparation of a project proposal for the empowerment of indigenous women through access to information and communication technologies; and (b) the development of a new website section on information and communication technologies and women's empowerment.

12. Within the priority area of security and gender, the following activities were mentioned: (a) two e-discussions on gender and security sector reform and on gender and conflict prevention; (b) the INSTRAW workshop entitled "What next? Research and training for the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325"; (c) the presentation of the statement to the Security Council on 28 October 2004; (d) the development of a new website section on gender and security sector reform; and (e) the preparation of a project proposal on improving the physical security of vulnerable Haitian women in the Dominican Republic in partnership with the World Food Programme.

13. Regarding women's political participation, the following activities were highlighted: (a) a project proposal to be funded by the Spanish Agency for International Cooperation (AECI) entitled "Strengthening governance with a gender perspective and the participation of women at the local level"; (b) a meeting with ministers for women's/gender affairs from Central American countries, Mexico and the Andean region to discuss and receive inputs to the project; (c) the preparation of a project proposal on women's political participation in the Maghreb region; and (d) a new website section on women's political participation to be launched by the end of June 2005.

14. The Director informed the Board of plans for a new INSTRAW series of papers entitled "New voices — new perspectives". This series will provide an opportunity for students enrolled in gender-related programmes to contribute to global debates and to the communal sphere of knowledge on women's and gender issues. The Board was informed that a call for papers in the five strategic areas of the 2005 work programme had recently been launched and that some 45 abstracts had been received from countries in all world regions. All papers selected for the series will be published online, while three will be published in print format.

15. Under strategic objective 2, information and communication, the Director highlighted: (a) the preparation of a series of overview reports covering each of the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action;[1] (b) the development of a website section covering the Beijing review process in all world regions; (c) the INSTRAW magazine, recently launched on the Institute's website, which contains opinion pieces, interviews and relevant news items on gender issues worldwide; and

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

(d) an agreement reached with the Organisation internationale de la francophonie to review and translate all INSTRAW materials into French.

16. Among the activities implemented under strategic objective 3, capacity-building, the Director highlighted: (a) the expansion of the website section on gender training materials and tools for gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment; (b) the finalization of a manual for home-based caregivers for patients with HIV/AIDS in Southern Africa; and (c) collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in activities to update a gender training package.

17. During the period under review, the Board was informed of numerous activities related to the implementation of strategic objective 4, institutional development. Among them were: (a) interviews with authorities in donor countries; (b) the participation of INSTRAW staff in high-level discussions, presentations and relevant international events; (c) the strengthening of networks with civil society and academia; (d) the development of 16 project proposals and 10 project profiles for all regions within the strategic areas of the Institute; (e) the reactivation of the internship programme with the simultaneous participation of four to five interns and one United Nations Volunteer; and (f) agreements on collaboration reached with a number of entities, including the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, IDB, the Pan American Health Organization/World Health Organization, UNESCO, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the United Nations Office for Project Services, the United Nations Online Network in Public Administration and Finance and the World Food Programme. The agreement with UNESCO includes partnership with INSTRAW in the establishment of a Palestinian Women's Centre.

18. Regarding the website, the Director informed the Board that there had been a significant increase in hits (52 per cent) and downloads (380 per cent) since the baseline was established in September 2004. She also provided information on the significant increase in visits to specific website sections, such as gender mainstreaming, research, remittances and the press room. During the month of March, 52 per cent of hits/downloads were not traceable by country of origin. Of those identified, 45 per cent came from developing countries, while 55 per cent were from developed countries.

19. The Board reviewed the financial situation of the Institute, including the decision of the General Assembly to provide the Institute with $1,092,400 to be used should there be a shortage of voluntary contributions for the functioning of the Institute in 2005. The Director provided information on the contributions from 1 January (through May 2005) amounting to $46,895 and of pledges received (as of May 2005) in the amount of $830,000.

20. Following the presentation, the members of the Board noted with appreciation the efforts made by the Institute over the past few months with limited resources. It approved the central themes of the work programme and noted that they were in line with the priorities established in the strategic framework. *Moreover, the* Board members were pleased that the Institute had been able to quickly position itself favourably in major issues where a gender perspective needed to be integrated. The Board also noted that the Institute was working in close coordination with the United Nations system, thereby avoiding duplication of activities.

21. The Board agreed that migration-related issues, such as remittances, were indeed timely and relevant for all regions. In this regard, Board members requested the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat to invite INSTRAW to collaborate in activities for the session of the Commission on Population and Development to be held in 2006, and for the "High-level dialogue of the General Assembly on international migration" to be held in 2006.

22. INSTRAW activities related to the preparation of projects on the trafficking of women and girls and to HIV/AIDS were also welcomed by the Board.

23. Board members also expressed their satisfaction with the Institute's website, and in particular with its multilingual and information-sharing approach, thereby making important information on gender issues accessible to all world regions.

24. The Board decided to take note with appreciation of the report presented by the Director and expressed its satisfaction for the results achieved in so few months.

B. Proposed programme of work and operational budget for 2006

25. The Board had before it the proposed workplan and operational budget for 2006, which was introduced by the Director.

26. The Director informed the Board that the proposed workplan and operational budget had been prepared on the following bases: (a) the distribution of resources was calculated by costing the activities in the workplan for each of the expected accomplishments of the strategic plan; (b) a minimum infrastructure is maintained to allow the Institute to operate; (c) results justify the maintenance of approved posts; and (d) resource mobilization is a priority in order to seek core and extrabudgetary funding.

27. For strategic objective 1, research, the Director mentioned selected outputs, including: (a) research activities promoted through the INSTRAW website in new areas such as (i) the empowerment of women and poverty alleviation at the local level; (ii) the trafficking of women and girls; (iii) environment, gender and conflict; (b) eight studies on strategic areas already identified in the strategic framework posted on the INSTRAW website and disseminated through mailing lists and networks; (c) three studies to promote gender-responsive policies and the empowerment of women in strategic areas published and disseminated; (d) one comprehensive report and 10 case studies on women's political participation at the local level in Central America, Mexico and the Andean region (as extrabudgetary funding becomes available); and (e) at least three case studies developed on gender and remittances.

28. Under strategic objective 2, information and communication, the Director highlighted the following selected outputs: (a) the INSTRAW website providing up-to-date information on priority areas for gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women translated into other languages; (b) gender-related information posted on the website, organized and categorized by themes and geographic regions; (c) materials and resources provided to stakeholders for gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment developed by INSTRAW; (d) information disseminated through the INSTRAW magazine and in newsletters packaged for different users; (e) information on governance and women's political participation at the local level worldwide disseminated to promote experiences,

dialogue and relevant discussion on those issues (as extrabudgetary funding becomes available from AECI); and (f) dissemination of reports, studies, lessons learned and other relevant information on women's political participation at the local level (as extrabudgetary funding becomes available from AECI).

29. Selected outputs highlighted for strategic objective 3, capacity-building/training, included: (a) the development and dissemination of training programmes, materials and tools (including a roster of training institutes) for gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women; (b) the development and dissemination of training materials in strategic areas through the INSTRAW website; (c) identification and promotion of best practices and experiences on mainstreaming gender in curricular and other training activities; (d) strengthening or creation of networking to support the processes of governance with a gender perspective and women's political participation at the local level in Central America, Mexico and the Andean region (as extrabudgetary funding becomes available from the AECI); and (e) the development of e-training materials on gender mainstreaming or women's empowerment by INSTRAW in collaboration with other partners (as extrabudgetary funding becomes available).

30. Under strategic objective 4, institutional development, the Director mentioned the following selected outputs: (a) the development of project proposals and submission for extrabudgetary funding; (b) continued adherence to the results-based management approach; and (c) fund-raising activities implemented towards achieving sustainability for the core budget and for special projects.

31. In conclusion, the Director pointed out that the budget for 2006 had been prepared at a level commensurate with the amount of funds utilized for the Institute's operations during 2005. However, the total amount of the proposed budget for 2006 presented an 11 per cent increase over the 2005 budget due to increases in the cost of living in the host country.

32. The Board made some minor technical modifications to the workplan and operational budget for 2006.

33. The Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs made a statement in which he pointed out that the most challenging and crucial task of the Board at this session is how to help the Institute position itself on a more stable financial footing so that it can continue its particular efforts to promote the advancement of women, especially as agents and beneficiaries of economic and social development. He added that the Board should consider actions aimed at guaranteeing the medium-term sustainability of INSTRAW. He said that in his capacity as Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, he could assure that the Department would continue to support the Institute and its Board. He looked forward to the establishment by the Institute of an equally productive collaboration with the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, who also works closely with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

34. The Board noted with satisfaction that the contributions received in 2005 and the pledges, if received, may allow the Institute to meet most resource requirements for 2005. At the same time, the Board stressed the continued fragility of the financial situation of INSTRAW and expressed concern regarding the financing of the workplan and operational budget for 2006.

35. The Board decided to approve the workplan and to endorse the operational budget for 2006, subject to the availability of sufficient financial resources, and agreed to consider possible recommendations to be submitted to the General Assembly regarding financial support for the Institute at its resumed second session, to be held in October 2005.

C. Matters relating to fund-raising activities

36. The Board had before it a conference room paper on fundraising activities, which was introduced by the Director.

37. The Director informed the Board that in order to allow the Institute to fulfil its mandate in working towards the achievement of gender equality and the advancement of women worldwide, it was essential that the INSTRAW trust fund have a reserve. Such a reserve would allow for medium- and long-term planning and greater outreach of its activities. In line with the Institute's statutes regarding the role of members of the Executive Board in terms of enhancing the financial resources of the Institute, possible actions for fund-raising were submitted for consideration.

38. The Board reaffirmed the importance of fund-raising issues for medium- and long-term sustainability, as mentioned by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs.

39. Members of the Board emphasized the important role to be played by the Executive Board of INSTRAW in connection with fund-raising activities, as stipulated in the INSTRAW statute.

40. Board members requested that the Director of INSTRAW provide additional information on mechanisms related to fund-raising in order to further analyse the issue and take appropriate decisions. It was suggested that this information might be reviewed along with relevant paragraphs of the statutes related to the rules for receiving funding.

41. Board members suggested that the Institute might approach the private sector for funding, including, for example, such institutions as the Global Compact.

42. Noting the importance of seeking medium-term sustainable resources for INSTRAW, the Board requested that the Director, in consultation with the United Nations Secretariat and the President of the Board, prepare a detailed report that would include actions that could be taken by the Board and proposals for alternative mechanisms for fund-raising activities.

43. The Board decided to hold a resumed session in October 2005 in order to review fund-raising activities with a view to guaranteeing medium-term sustainability for INSTRAW and enhancing the role of the Board. At its resumed session, the Board will also consider its recommendations to be submitted to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session in support of INSTRAW. The Board also decided to invite the Controller of the United Nations to participate in the deliberations of the resumed session.

III. Closing of the session

44. The President of the Board informed the members that the date of the resumed session would be communicated to them at a later stage and closed the session.

United Nations E/2005/76

Economic and Social Council

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New York, 29 June-27 July 2005
Item 1 of the provisional agenda*
Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Requests from non-governmental organizations to be heard by the Economic and Social Council[1]

1. At its 28th meeting, on 13 May 2005, the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, acting in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31, had before it requests from non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Council to be heard by the Council in connection with the items in the Council's agenda for its substantive session of 2005.

2. The Committee decided to recommend that the following organizations be heard under the agenda items indicated:[2]

High-level segment

Item 2 of the provisional agenda
Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, as well as implementing the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits: progress made, challenges and opportunities

Coalition statements

Economic and Social Council NGO Forum, NGO Civil Society Forum, New York

Temple of Understanding (special; 1995) on behalf of the fifty-seventh annual DPI/NGO Conference on the theme "Millennium Development Goals: civil society takes action", New York

World Family Organization (general; 1948)

* E/2005/100.
[1] The present document was submitted late to allow more time for the list to be finalized and to allow NGOs concerned to submit written statements.
[2] Current status and the year in which the organization was granted that status appear in parentheses after the organization's name.

05-39397 (E) 270605

Association tunisienne des droits de l'enfant (special; 2000)

All Pakistan Women's Association (special; 1951)

Oasis Open City Foundation (special; 2003)

Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur (special; 2001) on behalf of the CONGO Committee for Social Development

NGO statements

Foundation for Research on Technology Migration and Integration (roster; 2004)

Institute of International Social Development (special; 2000)

Foundation for the Social Promotion of Culture (general; 2004)

International Movement ATD Fourth World (general; 1991)

Mediterranean Council for Burns and Fire Disasters (special; 2001)

Droit à l'energie SOS futur (special; 2004)

All India Women's Education Fund Association (special; 1999)

Virtue Foundation (special; 2005)

Public Services International (special; 1997)

Comité de Apoyo a los Trabajadores Agricolas (special; 2004)

Vivat International (special; 2004)

Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Council of North and South America (general; 1985)

Fondation internationale carrefour (special; 2003)

Peoples Decade for Human Rights Education (special; 1998)

Foundation for the Child and the Family (special; 2004)

Mumbai Education Trust (special; 2003)

Legião da Boa Vontade (general; 1999)

World Information Transfer (general; 2002)

Alliance Toward Harnessing Global Opportunities Corporation (roster; 2004)

Istanbul International Brotherhood and Solidarity Association (special; 2005)

Declaration submitted by Foundation for the Child and the Family regarding the mid-term review of the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

United Nations A/60/86–E/2005/77

General Assembly
Economic and Social Council

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General Assembly
Sixtieth session
Item 74 (a) of the preliminary list*
Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance: strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Economic and Social Council
Substantive session of 2005
New York, 29 June-27 July 2005
Item 5 of the provisional agenda**
Special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance

Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction, recovery and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster

Report of the Secretary-General***

Summary

The present report has been prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 59/279, adopted by the States Members of the United Nations in January 2005 in the light of global concern over the impact of the earthquake and tsunami that struck the Indian Ocean region. The report identifies the lessons learned from the humanitarian response effort and highlights key issues that have come out of the ongoing recovery effort in the affected countries. In doing so, it examines successes and challenges specific to the earthquake-tsunami response and recovery effort, and addresses several themes universal to disaster response and recovery, such as national ownership and leadership, disaster response capacity, coordination in the relief and recovery phases, resource mobilization, civil society engagement and risk reduction. The report concludes with a set of observations and recommendations from the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council and to the General Assembly for further discussion.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, which requested the Secretary-General to report annually to the General Assembly and to the Economic and Social Council on the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance. The report is also submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/279 of 19 January 2005 entitled "Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster", which requested the Secretary-General to report on its implementation to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session, and to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session in 2005.

II. Defining the crisis

2. On 26 December 2004 a massive earthquake measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale struck the west coast of northern Sumatra and was followed by several severe aftershocks. The earthquake, the fourth strongest in the world since 1900 and the strongest in 40 years, led to a 10-metre displacement of the seabed. It triggered a large tsunami that surged with catastrophic force across the Indian Ocean, striking the west coast of northern Sumatra within minutes and then hitting the western coastline of Thailand, Myanmar and Sri Lanka, the east coast of India and the low-lying Maldives island archipelago before reaching the coast of Africa, causing some deaths and damage in Seychelles and Somalia. Twelve countries were affected in all.

3. Approximately 240,000 people were killed by the disaster: 50,000 are missing and feared dead, and more than one million persons were displaced. In many affected areas, three times as many women were killed as men; children represented more than a third of the victims overall, and in some communities more than half. Indonesia was the country most affected, as the coastline of its Aceh Province was damaged by the initial force of the earthquake and then immediately engulfed by the tsunami. In Indonesia, Somalia and Sri Lanka the disaster took place within the context of long-standing complex crises, which had significant implications for the organization and delivery of humanitarian assistance, including, in particular, to those who had already been displaced by conflict.

4. The earthquake and tsunami predominantly affected poor coastal communities, destroying not only critical infrastructure, administrative capacity and basic services, but also key sources of livelihoods. An initial assessment undertaken by the Government of Indonesia with the support of the World Bank and the United Nations estimates that Aceh Province in Indonesia suffered 4.5 billion United States dollars ($) in damage, representing 97 per cent of its gross domestic product (GDP), 78 per cent of which is comprised of small trade, farming and fisheries. The United Nations estimates that Sri Lanka suffered estimated direct losses of one billion United States dollars (4.5 per cent of GDP), including approximately $450 million in damage to the so-called "social sectors", such as housing, and nearly $300 million in damage to the tourism industry. In Maldives, the estimate of total damage has reached $470 million, or 62 per cent of the country's GDP. Economic losses were even significant in the larger and relatively well-developed economies of India, where 500 fishing villages were damaged along the Andaman coast, and in Thailand, where about 120,000 people lost their jobs in the tourism sector.

5. Six months after the disaster, the immediate survival needs of those who were directly affected have been addressed. Almost all these populations have access to adequate water supplies, although in many camps sanitation facilities are below internationally recognized minimum standards for relief situations. The clearing of debris has been largely completed along the main roads. In Sri Lanka some 30,000 provisional shelters have been built; in Indonesia 11,000 earthquake-resistant homes are under construction. As most supply lines for food and medicine have been re-established, the situation is gradually stabilizing. However, considerable and continuous seismic activity in the region — including a significant aftershock in the vicinity of Nias Island in Indonesia in late March — has caused further death and damage, has slowed recovery efforts and continues to take a psychological toll on the population. It is clear that even as the recovery phase progresses, significant humanitarian needs — particularly among women, children, minorities, migrant workers and the internally displaced — will persist for many months.

A. The initial response

6. Affected Governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the Red Cross/Red Crescent movement and local communities played a crucial role in the response. Government agencies quickly took the lead in organizing and coordinating the relief efforts, local NGOs and Red Cross/Red Crescent volunteers provided immediate emergency assistance and host family networks offered shelter to the homeless. National actors also provided international actors with invaluable information for initial assessments and mapping. The role of the military in cleaning debris and clearing roads was vital.

7. For example, the Government of Indonesia deployed 600 troops and transportation assets to Nanggore Aceh Darussalam to accelerate relief efforts and to work closely with international partners in relief distribution and initial damage assessments. The Government of Sri Lanka immediately placed all of its military, administrative and logistical assets at the disposal of the relief community and rapidly instituted compensation schemes for people affected by the tsunami. The Government of Thailand promptly provided health and other services to victims, while leading a massive forensic operation to identify bodies of foreign victims of the tsunami. The Government of India responded by releasing $155.56 million and 20,900 trained search and rescue personnel for carrying out immediate relief in its own affected states and union territories, and by deploying medical teams, naval ships, aircraft and several tons of relief supplies to Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka. In Somalia, while the remoteness of the affected communities had an effect on the speed of the response, local communities, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), the Somali Red Crescent Society and NGOs were quick to address immediate needs by mobilizing in-country resources and distributing much-needed relief items. The role of the local authorities in Puntland and of community elders in the towns and villages was invaluable, as they assisted humanitarian agencies in identifying the neediest populations.

8. International assistance to tsunami-affected countries began as soon as government requests for assistance were received. Following the onset of the disaster, the Governments of Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka declared a state of emergency. The Governments of Indonesia, Maldives, Seychelles and Sri Lanka

formally requested international assistance. In Somalia the regional authorities of Puntland declared an emergency, and the Transitional Federal Government appealed for assistance.

9. Following the above-mentioned requests, five United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination teams composed of 44 disaster-response experts from 18 countries and four international organizations were deployed to five of the tsunami-affected countries. Sixteen United Nations agencies, 18 IFRC response teams, more than 160 international NGOs and countless private companies and civil society groups deployed to affected areas to provide emergency food, water and medical services to the estimated five million people in need of assistance. Some 35 countries provided military assets for the relief effort and the United Nations deployed civil-military coordination officers to key locations in the region. The United Nations Joint Logistics Centre established coordination centres in Indonesia and Sri Lanka to optimize logistics capabilities and to assist in the coordination and use of military assets. In order to facilitate the collection and flow of information among humanitarian actors, the United Nations activated the Virtual On Site Operations Coordination Centre, an online information exchange service to support real-time coordination, and set up humanitarian information centres in Indonesia and Sri Lanka to facilitate information flow. An inter-agency emergency telecommunication network was established in Indonesia to provide the communications infrastructure for coordination and operational management. The joint United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)/Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Environment Unit carried out rapid environmental assessments in collaboration with United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination teams in Indonesia, Maldives and Sri Lanka to identify acute environmental issues. In India the relief operations were coordinated by the Government without any external assistance; however, the United Nations disaster management team was engaged in sharing information about damages and losses with other partners, including bilateral agencies, NGOs and the private sector. Within days, most communities had received assistance; however, it took up to six weeks to reach those areas where access was most difficult.

10. Immediately following the disaster, the Secretary-General appointed the Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator, Margareta Wahlstrom, as the Special Coordinator for humanitarian assistance to tsunami-affected communities to provide leadership and support to the United Nations country team, and particularly to facilitate the delivery of international assistance through high-level consultations with the concerned Governments.

11. The disaster also generated an unprecedented display of public and private solidarity, making greater resources available for the emergency over a shorter period of time than for any other crisis. The United Nations estimates that a total of $6.8 billion has been pledged to the tsunami effort, including $5.8 billion from government sources and $1 billion (35 per cent) from corporate and private donations. Media reports indicate that at least another $1 billion has been contributed by private donors but not reported to the United Nations.

12. Some of those funds have been channelled through United Nations appeals. On 6 January 2005 the United Nations launched a flash appeal requesting $977 million in humanitarian and recovery assistance for the first six months. At a ministerial meeting held in Geneva on 11 January 2005, 25 states pledged a total of

$777 million towards the appeal as well as towards additional reconstruction activities. Fifteen days after the disaster, 60 per cent of the funds solicited in the flash appeal were committed or paid out. Following a mid-term review of the appeal in April 2005, the requirements were revised to $1,086 million. The OCHA financial tracking service estimates that in June 2005 $880 million was contributed to the appeal and a further $162 million was committed. Significantly, however, much of the tsunami funding has been contributed through non-United Nations channels, including such international organizations as the IFRC, which has reported receiving $2.2 billion, and large non-governmental organizations.

13. Such solidarity has extended to the intergovernmental level as well. On 6 January 2005 the members of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) convened a ministerial-level meeting in Jakarta and adopted the Declaration on Action to Strengthen Emergency Relief, Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Prevention in the Aftermath of the Earthquake and Tsunami Disaster on 26 December 2004, which aimed to mobilize further the international emergency relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes. At a special session on the earthquake and tsunami held at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction on 20 January 2005, more than 160 Governments called for the development of a tsunami early warning system in the Indian Ocean, and meetings were held to plan the establishment of early warning capacities. On 19 January 2005, many of the concepts in the Jakarta declaration received formal and broad endorsement from Member States in General Assembly resolution 59/279 on strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the aftermath of the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster, which emphasized the need for the international community to maintain its focus and support to tsunami-affected countries beyond the emergency phase.

B. Early recovery

14. From the outset, the response effort included recovery activities. Within two weeks of the crisis, the United Nations dispatched recovery teams to the affected areas to begin assessing disaster damage and to support national authorities in recovery planning. In addition, the Special Coordinator for humanitarian assistance to tsunami-affected countries was accompanied by a representative from the United Nations Development Group on several visits to the region to focus immediate attention on early recovery needs and to ensure that relief programmes incorporated early recovery elements.

15. The Governments of several of the affected countries, in partnership with the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the United Nations, were also to give early attention to assessing recovery and reconstruction needs and are currently in the process of finalizing medium- and long-term plans. Three months after the disaster, the Government of Indonesia unveiled its master plan for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of Aceh, Nias and North Sumatra and then established the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Agency (BRR) to oversee its implementation. The formation of a dedicated government agency with a strong mandate and dynamic staff has done much to align the international community around a common set of values and standards for recovery and reconstruction programming. In Sri Lanka, a 24-month transitional strategy launched by the United Nations system in support of the Government's new post-tsunami recovery will be

unveiled at the end of July. In India, the Planning Commission of the Government of India established the Inter-Ministerial Core Group to prepare and manage a 156-week, $2.19 billion tsunami rehabilitation programme for all affected areas. In Thailand, the Government established a committee on rehabilitation management and development of the tsunami-affected countries along the Andaman coast. In Maldives, the Government has developed a detailed national recovery and reconstruction plan whose objectives include macroeconomic recovery and livelihood revival, community empowerment, environmental protection and disaster preparedness, and effective public service delivery.

16. To facilitate support for and implementation of the national plans, the Secretary-General appointed former President of the United States Bill Clinton as the Special Envoy for the Indian Ocean tsunami recovery effort. In that role, former President Clinton is working to maintain the world's attention on the tsunami operations, support coordination efforts at the country and global levels, promote transparency and accountability, and champion the kind of recovery that seizes the moral, political and financial opportunities the crisis has offered to set affected communities on a better — and safer — development path. To that end, President Clinton convened a "global consortium" of affected Governments, United Nations agencies, international organizations, international financial institutions and NGOs to improve coordination among the main actors, particularly at the country level, to facilitate the implementation of individual countries' reconstruction plans and to instil common transparency and accountability measures. The Special Envoy also visited a number of the affected countries in late May to assess progress in launching the recovery process.

III. Response successes, challenges and lessons learned

17. The Indian Ocean tsunami disaster created one of the most complex coordination and logistical challenges the disaster response system of the United Nations has ever had to manage. The timing and scale of the event required quick and flexible coordination efforts in a variety of countries and contexts, and its global reach led to a proliferation of relief actions and actors and garnered assistance from public, private and government sources at the highest levels. While such global attention and support has been both welcome and constructive, the high-intensity environment it has created has raised expectations of performance and accountability. Recognition of that context is the key to defining the challenges arising from the initial response. The following sections highlight observations and lessons learned from the response effort in five key areas.

A. National ownership and leadership

18. The fact that the disaster affected strong national Governments with well-developed national institutions and functioning legal frameworks greatly contributed to the success of relief efforts. In many areas, the relief effort benefited from robust involvement from line ministries, armed forces and the use of existing government structures, where they were in place. The collaborative relationship between the international and national relief actors and among all levels of Government ensured

greater ease in relief distribution and simplified the handover of humanitarian and early recovery activities to the appropriate government bodies.

Lessons learned

19. **Pro-active government coordination and collaboration significantly facilitated relief efforts**. In Indonesia the immediate appointment and placement in Aceh of a senior minister to coordinate response activities ensured that international and national response activities were complementary. In Sri Lanka, all parties and authorities immediately recognized the need for local-level coordination mechanisms that included the United Nations, NGOs and local representation, to ensure relief delivery and coordination in northern and eastern parts of the country. The Government of Thailand, in close collaboration with foreign Governments, was instrumental in ensuring a rapid and efficient evacuation of foreign nationals, and in coordinating international relief. The adoption by several Governments of emergency immigration procedures (visas upon arrival) and emergency customs clearance procedures accelerated the processing of relief personnel and goods in the early days of the crisis. Following the first two months, however, such procedures became increasingly complicated, resulting in the delay of many relief items and of items necessary for operations support (such as computers, telecommunication equipment, vehicles and essential aid supplies) and included some government restrictions on the use of satellite systems. Such administrative bottlenecks slowed relief efforts and impeded the effective delivery of much-needed assistance.

20. Effective national and international collaboration in disaster response would benefit from renewed engagement on mutual obligations and commitments to abide by agreements, such as the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations, and from building knowledge of the body of practice on those issues that has developed over time.

21. **Early engagement with Government at local levels ensured greater collaboration in the short and medium term**. The affected Governments did not try to centralize authority during the relief effort, but instead welcomed engagement and coordination at subnational levels to facilitate their response. For example, the open, receptive and collegial attitude of senior government officials in Aceh and in Jakarta provided the basis for a strong and cooperative relationship during the initial phase, whereby sectoral and civil-military coordination meetings took place at a local level with the full support of national authorities. In India, the Government deployed experienced administrative officers to the most affected district of Nagapatinam in the state of Tamil Nadu to coordinate relief operations locally and, in collaboration with NGOs, set up a coordination centre that operated out of the district administration office.

22. Local actors are essential to successful response coordination, yet local government structures do not always have sufficient resources to perform such coordination tasks. Productive collaboration with local institutions, therefore, requires pre-disaster preparedness planning to develop relationships with local institutions in disaster-prone areas and build their capacity where they are weak.

B. Response capacity

23. By most accounts, the United Nations disaster response system functioned well: established emergency response networks and tools were quickly deployed and assistance teams reached all affected areas within the first six weeks. No epidemics or major outbreaks of disease took place, close to two million people received emergency medical assistance and an equal number received food aid. School supplies were distributed to more than 700,000 children, and most children in affected areas quickly went back in school.

24. However, the response suffered from gaps in certain sectors — shelter, water and sanitation — owing in large part to the sheer magnitude of the problem but also to the inability of the system to quickly field and maintain a cadre of sufficiently skilled and experienced staff. The response also suffered from a high turnover of United Nations staff and the delayed deployment of some critical United Nations common humanitarian services, particularly information management, communications and civil-military capacity, complicating coordination in the early days.

Lessons learned

25. **Significant gaps in sectoral capacity continue to impede response efforts.** Recurrent gaps in the system's ability to provide adequate clean water, shelter and appropriate sanitation facilities continue to impede a rapid humanitarian response. There is therefore a need to reinvest in developing and maintaining systemic capacity for humanitarian response by increasing and strengthening professional staffing and administration in key sectors, and by forming and supporting strategic partnerships that tap into NGO capacity and draw on existing expertise of local and regional organizations. In that regard, the Emergency Relief Coordinator has launched a system-wide humanitarian response review to evaluate the strengths and limitations of the current system and make practical recommendations as to how weaknesses might be addressed. The results of the review are scheduled to be available in June.

26. **The immediate and strategic deployment of common services is essential to ensuring effective response.** The fielding of United Nations Joint Logistics Centre staff as members of United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination teams was instrumental in jump-starting critical logistics tasks. However, civil-military coordination officers of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and humanitarian information centres were not activated as part of rapid response mechanisms but were deployed through more formal channels and were therefore delayed. The mobilization of telecommunication systems was difficult, and data collection, analysis and dissemination suffered from a lack of standards and systems. Such challenges may be addressed by United Nations recognition of the strategic value of such services during the earliest phase of a crisis and by the development of the mechanisms and standards that allow early deployment of common humanitarian services

27. Rapid response capacity could also be strengthened by the formation of a standing global response capacity under the auspices of the United Nations, with immediate responsibility and authority to engineer the initial response. Such a system might also involve the development of regional capacities, particularly in

disaster-prone regions, so that relief teams and supplies can be employed more quickly and with a better understanding of local contexts. Initiatives such as the ongoing efforts by the Organization to expand the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination roster and the request by Indonesia to ASEAN (ASEAN) for a military assets rapid response mechanism for disasters in the region should be encouraged.

C. Coordination tactics and tools

28. Establishing effective response coordination mechanisms was one of the greatest challenges of the response effort. However, overall, coordination at the international, national and regional levels went well: standby arrangements with donors and the private sector to provide staff, equipment, transport and other assistance enhanced the timeliness of the response; the assistance of the military — national and international — was instrumental in early aid delivery; and the early deployment of senior United Nations staff to the Indian Ocean region also increased the effectiveness of coordination.

29. Coordination was not always smooth, however. Some areas were flooded with relief items and with actors who did not have the capacity to assist. In other areas the assistance provided did not match needs. Quickly establishing appropriate coordination structures with the variety of actors that arrived on the scene proved difficult in many cases. The resulting "humanitarian traffic jam" at times led to miscommunication, ad hoc planning, and assistance delays, and the United Nations field-level leadership did not always have the support necessary to assist the Governments in carrying out strategic coordination functions.

Lessons learned

30. **Leadership and coordination should be adequately supported at the field level**. While the Emergency Relief Coordinator provided effective management and strategic thinking at the headquarters level, such critical functions were not as well supported in the field. In many cases, the resident/humanitarian coordinator lacked the staff resources to be able to perform the leadership and coordination functions required for such a large-scale response. The fact that the Special Coordinator for humanitarian assistance to tsunami-affected countries was able to act as a mobile support unit to the resident/humanitarian coordinators highlighted the need for such support at a field level. It is critical that the resident/humanitarian coordinator be immediately supported with staff and capacity for critical coordination functions and with the capacity to begin recovery activities from the outset as well as being explicitly highlighted as part of the initial funding appeal.

31. **Improved civil-military relations are required to ensure a better match of humanitarian needs and requests with military capability**. The quick and generous contribution of assets and personnel by the military of many countries, including the affected Governments, was key to accessing hard-to-reach populations and filled many of the technical gaps civilian capabilities could not provide. However, in some cases, the activities of civilian and military actors overlapped. As a result, relief goods were not always distributed in the right form and quantity and where they were most needed, and parallel relief pipelines ensued. The situation was further compounded by insufficient understanding of military command structures

and by inadequate information sharing between the humanitarian community and the military. Ensuring the most effective use of military and civil defence assets requires well-defined roles and responsibilities, clear channels of communication, and respect for and an appropriate level of sensitivity to humanitarian principles. Given the above, there is a need to improve the civil-military coordination operational framework.

D. Resource mobilization

32. The tsunami generated an extraordinary display of solidarity, making enormous resources available quickly and generating new sources of funding from the private and business community. While such a response allowed the humanitarian community to operate without focusing on fund-raising, the high-stakes financial environment such generosity created put pressure on humanitarian organizations to spend funds quickly and raised the bar for how such spending — and its impact — is reported to both donors and recipients. This has been further complicated, in some cases, by the fact that contributions have far exceeded the capacity of many organizations to spend them in the response phase. As a result, organizations have had to consider rapidly their own planning for the medium term and develop strategies quickly for reporting and communicating the use of those funds.

Lessons learned

33. **Improvements in the type and style of reporting and accountability are critical if the participation of new constituencies in future emergencies is to be maintained**. Although the humanitarian system's internal and external accountability mechanisms are well-established, the unprecedented volume of funds pledged or contributed for the tsunami, particularly from the private sector, has increased scrutiny over how such funds are spent. This led to an agreement between the United Nations and PricewaterhouseCoopers for the pro bono use of 8,000 hours of professional services to assist the United Nations with its immediate accounting and tracking of contributions raised under the tsunami flash appeal and with the expansion of its existing financial tracking systems for emergency appeals to fit the requirements of the new funding environment. Such improvements are critical to increasing confidence and support from both Governments and the private sector, now and in future crises. However, the value of such a system depends on the cooperation of all entities concerned, both within and outside the United Nations system, particularly in the provision of information about their allocation and expenditures in a timely manner.

34. Moreover, the spontaneous giving witnessed in the aftermath of the tsunami has put many humanitarian agencies and organizations in the unusual position of holding an exceptionally generous reserve of relief funding. In some cases, agencies are considering how to support the activities of other organizations in same sectors. Other organizations have stopped receiving tsunami funds, requesting potential donors to direct their contributions to other crises. Still others have been able to incorporate the tsunami funding into long-term reconstruction plans. In order to maintain public trust, humanitarian organizations, irrespective of how they choose to handle such funds, should communicate their intentions in a transparent way.

35. **Large amounts of resources require strengthened local-level coordination.** Driven by huge amounts of resources and the pressure from donors to act, many organizations responded to the crisis by initiating simultaneous, multiple relief projects and executed them with large numbers of staff, complicating coordination in many areas. In the rush for rapid action, many international actors were also perceived as neglecting their national and local counterparts and failing to take the local context into account. Coordination is crucial in such cases, and must involve donors, NGOs and national counterparts.

E. Displacement and protection challenges

36. In the aftermath of the tsunami, an estimated one million people were displaced in a relatively short period of time. After the first few weeks, however, the large numbers of temporarily displaced persons began to diminish as the situation stabilized and people started returning to their home areas. The fluidity with which displaced populations moved (particularly in Aceh), the increasing strain on host families and the destruction of livelihoods challenged the national authorities' and the international community's ability to develop a response tailored to the needs of different categories of populations and raised concerns about the potential for sexual and gender-based violence, including the possibility for kidnapping or the recruitment of children into fighting forces. Initiatives to temporarily relocate populations were further complicated by the political situation in Indonesia and Sri Lanka, and by previous relocation initiatives in the Maldives.

Lessons learned

37. **Addressing the particular needs of the internally displaced in the initial response phase is critical.** The immediate relief phase of any sudden-onset disaster should focus on responding to the urgent, life-saving needs of as many people as possible. That includes addressing the specific protection and assistance needs of internally displaced persons and involving them in relief planning from the outset so as to ensure the equitable distribution of aid and so as not to reinforce pre-existing inequalities. Special measures for the assistance and protection of internally displaced persons and host families should therefore be ensured and should be included in the programming and implementation of projects.

38. **An early focus on specifically vulnerable categories of the disaster-affected population is required.** Internally displaced persons have special needs, not only for assistance but also for protection. In the wake of the tsunami, specific fears were raised about protection of women and children and the risk of sexual violence and trafficking. There were early fears that sexual, gender-based and domestic violence, significant problems in some of the affected countries before the tsunami, might escalate as the loss of family members, livelihoods and mental strain would put additional stress on affected individuals. While there were reports of abuse, they remained limited in number, and considerable attention was paid to ways to avoid the risk as well as protect especially vulnerable persons. Early advocacy and vigilance in child protection by Governments helped prevent trafficking and exploitation of children, a fear that generated a great deal of attention in the early stages of the emergency. Advocacy with respect to good adoption measures was also important. As the response effort moves into a recovery phase, addressing the

difficult issues of land rights, documentation and compensation will become increasingly important.

39. **The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement should be extended to natural disasters.** During the past few years, much work has been put into creating a generally accepted international standard for the protection and assistance of the displaced, based on the experience of massive displacement in war and conflict situations. While it is acknowledged that the Guiding Principles do not reflect the particular situation arising from short-term and massive displacement by natural disasters, their general guidelines deserve to be used as a standard. However, while the Guiding Principles can be helpful in asking the right questions, they are not likely to provide the same answers everywhere. Adequately assisting internally displaced persons requires knowledge and understanding of the specific context in which the disaster occurred.

IV. Post-disaster recovery: successes, current and future challenges

40. Managing the transition from relief to recovery in the tsunami disaster is a critical concern for the future, as it includes (a) identifying lingering gaps and vulnerabilities; (b) aligning resource requirements and uses; (c) ensuring overall operational coherence across actors, activities and phases; (d) building linkages across humanitarian and development initiatives; and (e) undertaking risk reduction as a conscious part of recovery. Failure to build and sustain the momentum and support for all of the preceding activities will squander an important opportunity to rebuild critical infrastructure while simultaneously improving the lives and livelihoods of those affected and building national and local capacity to prepare for future disasters.

41. The pace of transition to recovery has and will continue to vary from country to country, requiring different approaches to the recovery effort. Recent reports from the field suggest that the impact of early recovery efforts is indeed uneven. The Government of Sri Lanka, for example, is reporting that about 17,300 families made homeless by the tsunami still live in 100 camps. Of those, 9,480 families live in tents, particularly in those coastal areas where available land away from the coastline is scarce. However, construction of transitional shelters is gaining momentum (31,000 in June), so it is hoped that those numbers will be significantly reduced in the short term. In Aceh, the continuing movement of internally displaced persons between various shelter options reflects attempts by the population to best align themselves for the start of the recovery phase and to have access to reconstruction assets and materials as quickly as possible. Work now being initiated by the Reconstruction and Rehabilitation Agency aims to ensure that affected populations understand how the reconstruction process will succeed and what role they can play in it.

42. As the recovery effort moves forward in all of the affected countries, it will become critical to sustain support to the affected Governments and communities for such recovery activities and to align recovery programming as well as Government and community priorities with an awareness of the existing socio-economic situation. The following sections examine the broad issues and challenges that have surfaced in the early stages of the recovery phase.

A. Early government ownership

43. Early national ownership of and participation in the design and implementation of recovery programmes is essential, not only for the achievement of the desired impact of recovery efforts but also to strengthen capacities on the ground. Participation by local disaster management experts and technicians will help ensure that recovery programming considers the needs and capacities of the affected population, and involvement of national decision makers is critical to building consensus around recovery priorities, roles, responsibilities and resources.

44. To ensure that such ownership takes hold, external support must build up local actors and institutions through the transfer of technology and know-how and through public education. Support provided to the Government of Indonesia by international actors has included planning, mapping, shelter and employment development at the national, provincial and district levels. In Sri Lanka international teams have supported needs assessments and data collection. In India, post-tsunami humanitarian and recovery operations were boosted by close collaboration among government authorities, local communities and Indian United Nations volunteers. Indian United Nations volunteers were also assigned to assist the recovery programming and implementation in Maldives and Sri Lanka, and reportedly have been instrumental in accelerating early recovery efforts. In Thailand, national task forces were established to work with their international counterparts and follow-up on critical issues in the recovery phase. However, greater support and field-level coordination between national and international partners for the rehabilitation and reconstruction phase, including longer-term strategic planning, is needed.

B. A focus on recovery during the relief phase

45. The early attention to recovery in the relief phase of the emergency helped local populations get back on their feet. For example, in Indonesia, rubble removal operations undertaken under the concept of "cash for work" injected cash into the local economy, while also providing a psychological boost to the participating population of some 11,000 people.

46. However, in many areas, early recovery was not possible as damage to roads posed a problem for the early transportation and delivery of reconstruction materials. Enhanced arrangements with private contractors and standby partners with advanced logistical capabilities and air services would assist in overcoming such recovery difficulties in the early stages. There is also currently a vacuum within the United Nations system for accepted, system-wide mechanisms for post-disaster recovery, particularly those with a risk reduction focus. Gaps in areas, such as suitable assessment methodologies for identifying early recovery needs and predictable mechanisms for the deployment of technical experts to support recovery planning and programming and for funding key recovery and vulnerability reduction interventions in a timely fashion, have been identified as major shortcomings in the effort to close the gap between relief and development.

C. Coordination

47. There have been several key achievements in sectoral coordination among international and national actors in the early recovery phase. Sectoral coordination in the reconstruction phase, led by the Governments of Indonesia and Sri Lanka with the assistance of the World Bank, ADB, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations, resulted in the development of national reconstruction plans, which have mapped out all reconstruction actors and activities into a coherent strategy. In Indonesia and Sri Lanka, the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has assisted relevant line ministries and development banks in the preparation of their reconstruction plans in the agriculture and fisheries sector. In Sri Lanka, UNHCR (UNHCR), the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the International Organization for Migration worked together to link the transitional shelter strategy with permanent housing schemes. UNHCR and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) also conducted joint missions to assess the sexual and gender-based violence problems in the temporary government camps and devised a joint response plan. In Myanmar, coordination of sectoral activities proved efficient, thanks to an innovative joint coordination mechanism spearheaded by the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and the United Nations. In India, UNICEF has worked to bring together international and national NGOs to discuss water and sanitation issues at the national level as well as in Tamil Nadu. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Meteorological Organization and the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction have worked closely together with national agencies to build the institutional and technical foundations for a tsunami early warning system for the Indian Ocean region.

48. Despite such achievements, overall coordination of disaster recovery requires additional study and work. While disaster **response** is guided by clear and universally accepted coordination standards and tools, disaster **recovery** — which involves a wider range of actors — does not benefit from any formal overarching coordination structures. This is particularly true for international coordination at the country level and is compounded by the fact that resident coordinators do not have adequate support to fulfil their coordinating role. Recognizing the gap, the United Nations is currently using the occasion of the tsunami to identify what support is needed to improve coordination in disaster recovery.

D. Civil society engagement

49. The contributions of civil society during both the humanitarian assistance and the recovery phases have been unprecedented in many of the affected countries. Civil society groups in Thailand were essential to organizing recovery operations in cooperation with local governments and national authorities and to drawing attention to those who might otherwise have been overlooked, such as migrant workers from Myanmar and Moken sea nomads. In Indonesia, the Aceh Recovery Forum provided support and advice to the Government, the United Nations and the international financing institutions in the development of the Government's master plan for rehabilitation and reconstruction. Wide-ranging consultations with civil society in Aceh further enhanced the credibility of the planning process.

50. However, while it is widely understood that recovery programming must be based on the sound and participatory assessments of needs and capacities of the affected population, this has not always happened in practice. In several countries, concerns were raised by the affected populations about their lack of involvement in recovery planning. With the support of United Nations agencies and civil society organizations, decentralized capacities that promote participatory approaches to recovery are now being strengthened. Through that approach, it is hoped that sensitive issues, such as those regarding land rights, as well as the special vulnerabilities of minorities and migrant populations can be addressed.

E. Flexible and innovative fund-raising

51. Past experience suggests that funds that are readily forthcoming when a disaster dominates the news dry up later as attention wanes. That was the case following the earthquake in Bam, Iran in December 2003 and after Hurricane Mitch in October 1998, when only a small percentage of the hundreds of millions of dollars needed was ever pledged or paid out.

52. Recognizing that the window of opportunity for disaster fund-raising is narrow and short lived, the scope of the tsunami flash appeal was extended into the recovery phase, making it possible to raise resources for shelter, livelihood development, micro-infrastructure and the environment, and allowing the implementation of recovery plans and programmes without delay. Though the cash-rich environment the tsunami created made such flexibility possible, extending flash appeals to cover recovery needs should be considered a best practice for future disasters.

53. In addition, the fact that in many cases tsunami contributions are being applied to medium-term projects should help accelerate the recovery effort. With an estimated $6.8 billion pledged to the tsunami emergency, representing roughly half of the total reconstruction needs of all affected countries, the focus is therefore not on raising more money for recovery but on the implementation of the recovery plans. The recovery effort will also benefit from the efforts of the Global Consortium, convened by former President Clinton, which has been given the task of following up on recovery plans, keeping the momentum of reconstruction high and working with Governments to deal with the difficult policy and operational issues that typically stall recovery. The development of a common financial tracking database that aims to capture all forms of assistance, including official aid, NGO support and private sector contributions in one coherent system, will also facilitate recovery planning and implementation.

F. Early incorporation of risk reduction measures

54. In the recovery effort, all of the affected countries have been struggling to balance the need for rapid recovery with the importance of protecting their citizens from future disasters. Too often, societies affected by a major disaster tend to seek rapid and visible initiatives to restore normalcy, frequently at the cost of more sustainable and durable solutions. Failure to factor risk reduction into development policies, strategies and plans can result in large-scale disaster loss, increasing and costly demands on national and international humanitarian assistance and the

systematic erosion of economic growth and social welfare. The World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held from 18 to 22 January 2005, just a few weeks after the tsunami, provided timely guidance in that respect, through the launch of the long-negotiated intergovernmental agenda of priorities for action on disaster risk reduction, the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, on building the resilience of nations and communities to disasters.

55. Although it is generally accepted that it would have been impossible to prepare adequately for an event of such magnitude, it is nevertheless clear that effective early warning systems, including preparedness measures, could have saved thousands of lives. For example, the Government of India, following the 2001 earthquake in Gujarat, has been strengthening its capacity for disaster risk management at all levels for the last several years. As a result, when the tsunami struck Tamil Nadu, the villagers in one coastal district — who had received training in rescue operations and first aid under the disaster risk management programme — were able to save more than 100 lives. In this way, the tsunami has been instrumental in highlighting the need to empower communities at risk to protect themselves and their property from the impact of disasters. Developing community-based disaster preparedness plans — from stockpiling food and medicine, to building embankments in flood-prone areas and to including preparedness as part of teacher training and school curricula — would minimize the risk substantially. Further emphasis is also needed on building capacities for "end-to-end" early warning systems that include physical measures (earthquake-resistant structures, shelters, escape routes), preparedness plans and communications strategies that allow for quick and concrete action once warnings are issued.

V. Implications for future action and recommendations of the Secretary-General

Improve structures for national and international field response to major sudden-onset emergencies

56. Emergency response in sudden-onset disasters requires a commitment to further develop and coordinate rapid-response capacities and those common services that are instrumental in the immediate response phase. This includes reinforcing deployable capacity that does — or did — exist in disaster-prone countries. In addition, international response efforts would greatly benefit from strengthened field-level management for large-scale emergencies.

57. The United Nations, Governments and relevant civil society groups should commit to building and re-establishing regional, national and local disaster response capacities so that the humanitarian system has immediate access to deployable resources, particularly in disaster-prone areas.

58. The United Nations should expand and sustain its essential common humanitarian services so that they can be deployed predictably and with the right combination of skills.

59. The United Nations should develop a more unified field-level management structure to ensure response efforts are well coordinated and therefore effective. This includes strengthening support to resident/humanitarian coordinators.

Develop regional response capacity

60. Regional organizations are best equipped to respond with speed to a major disaster, benefiting from local knowledge and prior relationships with national decision makers. The United Nations should cooperate with regional organizations in disaster-prone regions so as to ensure that regional response plans and capacities are established and in place before a disaster strikes.

61. The international community should develop improved mechanisms for the deployment of regional standby capacities under the leadership of the United Nations, for example through pre-disaster agreements with regional organizations and the development of standard operating procedures for their deployment and coordination processes.

62. Governments should make their existing disaster response capacity available to such structures.

Build coherence within the civil-military response

63. The response to the tsunami by the military of different countries was unprecedented and critical to the initial life-saving and stabilization phase of the response. The tsunami was a watershed event in that respect. It is therefore likely that in future disaster-driven emergencies, military assets will be made available by States very quickly and in significant quantities. It is therefore necessary to ensure that the enormous capacity of the military contributes to the response in disasters, including establishing and better communicating accepted coordination procedures and structures between militaries and between military and humanitarian partners.

64. The United Nations should strengthen the procedures for the use and coordination of military assets in disaster response and develop more systematic links with major providers.

65. Recognizing that national military, civil defence and fire and rescue services are often the first responders, the disaster response community should actively engage those groups in determining when and how they can cooperate in disaster response.

Invest in early warning and preparedness

66. It is now widely recognized that the adoption of a regional tsunami early warning system could have saved thousands of lives. A regional system, however, will work only if it forms part of an "end-to-end" solution reaching the communities at risk and if it is supported by appropriate legal and institutional frameworks and local warning and emergency response systems. The United Nations should seek to foster regional frameworks and mechanisms for early warning systems as well as support technical and policy efforts for integrated risk management, in line with the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.

67. The international community should invest in systematic, people-centred early warning systems for all hazards and all countries and to reach all those at risk. They should include risk assessments, awareness raising and preparedness measures so that communities are ready and able to act upon warnings.

Enhance the coordination and capacity of the United Nations system for recovery

68. Strengthening the ability of the United Nations to support the affected Governments while coordinating its own humanitarian and recovery activities is essential to an effective recovery. Though coordination of emergency response is led by the Emergency Relief Coordinator and undertaken at the field level by humanitarian coordinators, there is no institutional equivalent or support at either headquarters or in the field for the recovery phase. Addressing such gaps includes identifying an institutional mechanism to provide leadership and coordination at headquarters and Government levels, creating greater synergies between the resident and humanitarian coordinator role in the reconstruction phase and strengthening the United Nations country team.

69. Recognizing the institutional, coordination and strategic planning gap that exists in disaster recovery, the United Nations system should support ongoing initiatives to identify the support that is needed to improve coordination of disaster recovery efforts.

Promote financial transparency and accountability

70. The increasing magnitude of disasters — and, consequently, of the scope of the response and recovery effort, — means that the United Nations will play a larger role in ensuring financial transparency and accountability in the use of funds. Strengthening and maintaining a transparent financial tracking system for both government and private contributions inside and outside global appeals will be essential. The system will also better incorporate private actions into coordination structures and financial tracking and engage key private sector actors in resource mobilization and coordination efforts. Initiatives, such as the financial tracking system developed with the assistance of PricewaterhouseCoopers should be encouraged. International organizations and Governments should also work together to strengthen the reporting and accountability mechanisms in the recovery and reconstruction phases.

71. The international community should encourage the development of a common mechanism within the United Nations system for the tracking and reporting of humanitarian funds and should urge organizations both within and outside the United Nations system to contribute to such mechanisms in a timely way.

72. International organizations and Governments should work together to strengthen the reporting and accountability mechanisms in recovery and reconstruction phases.

Commit to reducing vulnerability and risk

73. In spite of the compelling evidence linking risk reduction and sustainable development, commitment to and investment in vulnerability and risk reduction continues to be a challenge. Long-term support for sustainable economic development, resulting in strong civil societies as well as sound infrastructure, will help ensure that nations are prepared to weather the shocks from natural hazards.

74. The international community should commit to and invest in the implementation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.

Promote research and learning to guide recovery activities

75. Response and recovery programming must be based upon a sound, participatory assessment of the needs and capacities of the affected population, so that local initiatives, resources and capacities are fully understood and utilized. National policy development and consultation mechanisms and priority setting activities contribute to building consensus on recovery priorities, roles, responsibilities and resources.

76. The disaster response community should capture, consolidate and disseminate a body of knowledge on the lessons learned from the tsunami and other recent disasters that promotes institutional learning at all levels and guides future disaster management.

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Strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations

Report of the Secretary-General***

Summary

The present report addresses the theme of "strengthening of the coordination of United Nations humanitarian assistance, including capacity and organizational aspects". It examines some of the key humanitarian developments and challenges, particularly capacity gaps experienced in both complex emergencies and disasters during the past year. The report also analyses the implementation and impact of Economic and Social Council resolutions 2002/32, 2003/5 and 2004/50 with a view to strengthening the policy guidance such resolutions provide to the international community on humanitarian issues and activities. Finally, the report briefly discusses the roles of and complementarity among relevant United Nations entities in the area of multidimensional missions and follows up this and other issues with a set of observations and recommendations from the Secretary-General to both the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly for further strengthening the coordination of humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

* A/60/50 and Corr.1.
** E/2005/100.
*** The report was delayed for technical reasons.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared in compliance with General Assembly resolution 46/182 of 19 December 1991, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report annually to the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council on the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance. Moreover, it is submitted in compliance with the requests contained in General Assembly resolution 59/141 of 15 December 2004 and Economic and Social Council resolution 2004/50 of 23 July 2004 on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations.

II. Humanitarian developments

2. The level and scale of violence witnessed during the past few years in Afghanistan, Iraq, Darfur (the Sudan) and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is evidence that threats to human security are prevalent and continue to take an unprecedented toll on human life. That an earthquake in the Indian Ocean could trigger simultaneous emergencies in 12 separate countries and cause the largest single loss of life in places as far away as Sweden confirms that the impact of humanitarian crises is more far-reaching than ever before. Such large-scale conflicts and disasters have tested humanitarian response capacity to the limits and have challenged the ability of the humanitarian system to guarantee that such a response is effectively and appropriately applied. The expectation that larger and more visible crises will require greater capacity, quality and accountability in humanitarian response requires that the United Nations system examine — and strengthen — its current systems, tools and competencies. And the recognition that threats to human security are global and interconnected requires that humanitarian crises be tackled with common actions and joint resolve.

A. Overview

3. The Consolidated Humanitarian Appeal for 2005 reported that 26 million persons in 20 crises worldwide need US$ 4.5 billion in humanitarian assistance. Though this represents a decrease in the overall number of humanitarian crises during the past year, the financial requirements to address these crises are 25 per cent higher ($3.4 billion) — a testament that the last 12 months have witnessed a series of particularly large and destructive humanitarian crises.

4. The massive earthquake that took place off the coast of Sumatra, Indonesia, on 26 December 2004 and the resulting tsunami unleashed a series of major disasters across more than 12 nations, killing more than 240,000 persons and displacing well over a million. The hurricanes that struck the Caribbean in the fall of 2004 were the strongest storms in a decade, wreaking havoc on numerous small island developing States, many of which were unprepared for the level of devastation such storms would bring. Despite considerable early warnings, a swarm of desert locusts infested 10 different west and north African countries and decimated millions of hectares of crops in the summer of 2004. Thirty-five epidemics broke out worldwide, including polio, meningitis and tropical ulcers in the Central African Republic and an intense outbreak of the Marburg virus in Angola. The spectre of the

avian flu threatens parts of Asia with possible dire humanitarian consequences. Though the effects of disasters are difficult to measure, using preliminary figures compiled by the Collaborating Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters, it is estimated that in 2004 alone there were 360 disasters affecting more than 145 million persons and causing more than $103 billion in material damage.

5. Ongoing and indiscriminate fighting continues to escalate throughout the Darfur states, resulting in looting, burning of villages and killings, and includes a high incidence of violence against women and girls and deliberate attacks against aid workers. Such insecurity has displaced more than 2.4 million persons and continues to restrict the delivery of humanitarian aid — as of April 2005, 17 per cent of the region remained inaccessible to humanitarian actors, though humanitarian needs remain high. The World Food Programme estimates that 3.25 million persons in Darfur require humanitarian assistance in 2005; this is likely to increase as populations suffer the effects of drought. Access will be further complicated by the coming rainy season that will make it very difficult for aid agencies to deliver food over the region's inadequate roads. Additionally, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reports that since the end of 2002, the number of Sudanese refugees in Chad increased from 13,000 to 225,000, raising tensions between refugee and host communities as they compete for water, firewood and grazing land.

6. Remnants of civil strife and disagreements over the distribution of tsunami aid in Sri Lanka, rising tensions between the Government and Maoist insurgents in Nepal and failed peace negotiations, disarmament programmes and prevailing insecurity in West Africa, are undermining humanitarian efforts to assist civilian populations in many areas, pitching these countries towards humanitarian crises on a larger scale. Zimbabwe is this year suffering the worst food shortages in three years as a result of drought, acute shortages of agricultural inputs and a controlled price structure. Official sources indicate that maize production is below 500,000 tonnes, less than one third of the annual requirements of 1.8 million tonnes; the Government has provisionally indicated that 2.4 million of the most vulnerable people are currently in need of food aid.

7. In several areas of the world, refugees have been able to find a solution to their plight. According to UNHCR, the global number of refugees, excluding 4.1 million Palestinians assisted by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, is an estimated 9.3 million in 2004 — the lowest level since 1980. An estimated 1.5 million refugees worldwide were able to return to Afghanistan (940,000), Angola (90,000), Burundi (90,000), Iraq (194,000) and Liberia (57,000). However, almost 400,000 asylum requests were registered in 50, mostly industrialized, countries in Asia, Europe and North America in 2004.

8. Of continued concern is the number of internally displaced persons, which far outnumber recognized refugees: today 25 million persons remain displaced by war and human rights abuses in about 49 countries; from 70 to 80 per cent of them are women and children. An additional 25 million persons have been displaced by natural disasters. These numbers have remained virtually unchanged since 2000.

B. A case for Africa

9. Prospects for peace in nine African countries, including the resolution of the long-standing crisis in Angola and Sierra Leone, and the promise of the formation of the Transitional Federal Government in Somalia, present potential opportunities to make progress on the humanitarian front. In addition, several regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States, the South African Development Community and its New Partnership for African Development initiative, are making great strides in promoting humanitarian assistance, peace, security and sustainable development in a number of countries across the region.

10. However, high levels of humanitarian needs persist, the challenges involved in addressing such needs remain significant and attempts to exploit such opportunities and effectively engage regional, subregional and national institutions to address these needs have not worked. If the humanitarian system is serious about ending suffering in Africa, it must be more systematic in the way it approaches humanitarian crises there. This includes taking focused and coordinated steps to identify the level of need, to build, re-establish and employ indigenous early warning, preparedness and response capacity and to commit to funding such initiatives in an equitable and predictable way.

11. Today, many parts of Africa are dominated by several crises of protection and displacement, where acute insecurity and increased violence against civilians in many areas are preventing humanitarian agencies from delivering basic services to vulnerable populations. In Darfur, the escalation of fighting, high levels of sexual and gender-based violence and the deliberate targeting and killing of humanitarian staff have dramatically reduced the ability of the humanitarian community to provide assistance and address protection concerns throughout the crisis. In northern Uganda, an increase in violence and brutal killings, abductions, rapes and attacks by the Lord's Resistance Army is preventing humanitarian agencies from expanding basic services to 1.4 million internally displaced persons. In addition, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) estimates that about 20,000 children have been abducted since 1986, serving as soldiers, porters and sex slaves, and 35,000 children continue to travel by night to avoid abduction. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the World Health Organization estimates that nearly 40,000 women and men, girls and boys have become victims of sexual and gender-based violence, compounding the human impact of a conflict that has killed more than 3.8 million civilians since 1998. In Togo, violence following the outcome of the presidential elections has triggered refugee movements (34,000 persons) to Benin and Ghana. The number of internally displaced persons is unknown.

12. The African Union has been instrumental in enhancing the protection of civilians in Darfur, as it has provided protection in displacement camps and along routes used for the collection of firewood and water and has usefully ensured a proper balance of female police officers to assist in cases of sexual violence. Substantially increasing the levels of deployment of the African Union would go a long way to improving protection to civilians in Darfur. Such practices should be replicated in other contexts.

13. Successive seasons of drought in the Horn of Africa and in southern Africa have led to loss of assets and livestock and to severe food insecurity, requiring acute

and coordinated interventions to address the underlying problems in these regions. In Eritrea alone, close to 60 per cent of the population requires food assistance and the maternal malnutrition rate of 53 per cent is among the highest in the world. In southern Africa, where some areas received as little as 10 per cent of normal rainfall between mid-January and mid-March, reports of crop failures are already becoming more and more disturbing; Malawi, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Swaziland and parts of Mozambique seem worst affected. The AIDS epidemic there has only compounded humanitarian needs and increased vulnerability to drought cycles: UNICEF estimates that 4 million children orphaned by HIV/AIDS live with little access to the basics for survival; the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations estimates that countries affected by the AIDS pandemic could lose 13 to 26 per cent of their agricultural labour force by the year 2020.

14. Broad-based efforts, such as under Ethiopia's Coalition for Food and Livelihood Security, have begun to address response to drought and climate fluctuations through innovative insurance mechanisms. In southern Africa, high degrees of collaboration across the United Nations and with other stakeholders, including national Governments, donors and the Southern African Development Community non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have been instrumental in preventing increases in acute malnutrition and deaths arising from hunger. However, overall levels of vulnerability are increasing in both these areas in the absence of urgent and acute interventions, requiring that coordinated and sustained engagement through these initiatives continues.

15. The locust invasion in the summer of 2004, while preventable, attests to the fact that the critical capacity that once existed in Africa has been lost or eroded. The magnitude of the locust swarm that descended upon the Sahel region of Africa overwhelmed local response capability, as many of the affected countries had not faced locust problems for over 15 years. Although the United Nations had long promoted the development of the Emergency Prevention System (EMPRES) to address such a situation, the programme in west and north-west Africa is still not operational because of the lack of donor support. Though efforts are under way to contain future locust infestations, the desert swarms will most likely form again in north-west Africa at the beginning of the summer of 2005. It is therefore essential to expand the early warning capacities and build and maintain operational capacity on the ground to reduce the scale and impact of future swarms.

16. Despite both high levels of need alongside promising opportunities, funding levels for the United Nations consolidated appeals as of May 2005 demonstrate that donors still approach humanitarian crises with insufficient resources and an uneven hand. Of the 14 appeals for Africa, 8 have received less than 20 per cent of requirements so far. And with the exception of a small flash appeal for Angola, none have received more than 40 per cent. These funding imbalances are neither new nor aberrant: an analysis of the financial tracking system for the past three years suggests that resources that pay for prominent crises (Afghanistan, Iraq, the Indian Ocean tsunami) are indeed diverted from other areas and that promises to replenish aid budgets depleted by large-scale crises are not generally kept. These concerns also apply to the chronic, uneven funding of certain neglected sectors. Such funding levels and patterns are unacceptable if Africa is to be a global humanitarian priority, as stated by so many on so many occasions. What is needed is a "new deal" for humanitarian assistance in which the donors, for their part, develop less restrictive mechanisms for the disbursements of humanitarian assistance in exchange for

humanitarian organizations agreeing to operate against agreed benchmarks as to the scale, speed and intensity of response.

III. Strengthening humanitarian capacity

17. Recent events have demonstrated that the humanitarian community is capable of launching a massive response, when called upon. However, it has become equally apparent that the quality of such a response cannot always be guaranteed: humanitarian response does not always meet the basic needs of affected populations in a timely way, response varies considerably from crisis to crisis and current capacity levels are not always sufficient to meet the demands of major emergencies occurring at the same time. While some of the factors affecting response are specific to individual crises — such as the lack of access and obstruction of aid — some of the key challenges seem to be systemic in nature.

18. The ongoing crisis in the Darfur region of the Sudan demonstrated early on the difficulties of mobilizing capacity in a complex environment and continues to underscore some fundamental weaknesses in the capacity of the humanitarian response system. For example, when the humanitarian community was authorized to respond to the crisis in Darfur, a rapid and robust response was not entirely forthcoming. Bureaucratic measures taken by the Government and the escalation of fighting by both rebel groups and Government forces delayed the early deployment of humanitarian staff. However, even when the situation stabilized, the humanitarian system was unable to quickly mobilize substantial amounts of emergency funds or field appropriately skilled and seasoned staff. And while, over time, the humanitarian community has made progress in addressing the mandate and gaps and technical weaknesses in certain sectors — water and sanitation, shelter, protection and internally displaced persons camp management — coverage in these areas remains uneven.

19. The tsunami response also highlighted some key areas where response capacity could be strengthened. For example, the leadership and performance of the resident coordinators, who acted as humanitarian coordinators, varied from country to country. Some critical common services were slow to mobilize and pre-existing standby arrangements with Governments, notably the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination teams system and the International Humanitarian Partnership, while useful, might have benefited from better coordination and a broader range of staff and expertise. Well-known sectoral weaknesses became evident almost immediately and coordination, particularly in the health sector, was patchy. Coordination among NGOs and between NGOs and the United Nations was poor. And in recent months, as the response has shifted from relief to recovery and rehabilitation, it is clear that there is a need to improve the system's ability to focus on social and economic rehabilitation alongside infrastructure projects.

20. These and other crises also demonstrate that the humanitarian system has not been entirely successful at tapping into the often significant capacity that does exist, particularly at regional and national levels. National and local leadership of the relief and recovery effort following the December 2003 earthquake in Bam, Iran, was critical to immediate life-saving efforts as well as the smooth progress to the recovery phase. Similarly, countries such as Jamaica and Cuba were able to minimize the damage caused by the 2004 hurricane season because of effective

national and community programmes that allowed them to initiate evacuation, the provision of shelter and the management of relief supplies. The African Union has been vital to establishing the conditions necessary for the quick and effective delivery of humanitarian assistance in many parts of Africa. On the other hand, systems put in place to prevent mass locust infestation in north-western Africa have not been maintained.

A. Challenges

21. While the acute, complex and concurrent crises in Darfur, in the Indian Ocean region and elsewhere have brought to light the limitations of the current system, they also offer critical insight and lessons for how performance and service delivery might be improved.

Coordination capacity

22. Cooperation and collaboration of all stakeholders at the field level is crucial to ensuring that the system-wide capacity works effectively. Lack of sectoral coordination (both within and between sectors) can lead to gaps or overlap in coverage in some areas. Weaknesses in the coordination of military assets, logistics teams and standby arrangements often mean that critical assets and resources are not always used efficiently. Inconsistent planning between relief and recovery teams may undermine the credibility established by effective response and is critical to sustaining the well-being of the population. Coordination among local, national, regional and international response teams is essential, as the inevitable convergence of multiple response actors often complicates — rather than contributes to — the overall relief and recovery effort if roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined.

23. Such weaknesses in coordination capacity require establishing more routine and formalized approaches to sector coordination among United Nations agencies and partners and improving civil-military liaison to make the best and most appropriate use of what are critical assets. System-wide efforts should also be made to establish a broader common logistics and operational support infrastructure. Strategic planning is also critical to fitting early response efforts into overall relief priorities, risk reduction, resource mobilization and long-term planning. And creating "bottom-up" coordination approaches and structures that pro-actively involve and strengthen key local players from the outset will help ensure coherence and effectiveness throughout all phases of the recovery effort.

24. When the humanitarian effects of a crisis are beyond local capabilities to resolve, or in the case of natural disasters, when international help is requested, it is the United Nations country team of agencies, funds and programmes, that, under the leadership of the humanitarian coordinator is tasked with identifying, in collaboration with operational partners, the opportunities and constraints to effective humanitarian action. However, delays and gaps in response suggest a need to strengthen field coordination structures, including a more broadly based humanitarian country team, strengthening the leadership of the humanitarian coordinator and resident coordinator, and ensuring that sufficient and flexible resources are immediately available to support field structures adequately. Coordination would also be improved through the development of international

targets for the timeliness of response, the speed of disbursement and the predictability of support.

Surge capacity

25. Speed of deployment in emergencies and disasters is essential in ensuring effective coordination and timely service delivery. Though the humanitarian system's rapid response capacity was well demonstrated during the tsunami crisis, adequate deployment of appropriate staff and material resources to the Darfur crisis was less swift. Moreover, while common services — logistics, communication and information technology, and mine action — have become mission-critical to the movement of staff, resources, the identification and analysis of needs, and the delivery of assistance, such services need to be strengthened with additional, experienced staff, skilled in a variety of technical areas, capable of leading field operations and able to deploy at short notice. Finally, the provision of rapid financial analysis and close to real-time financial tracking is critical to enhancing the timing of the funding and, as a result, the quality of the response.

26. Improving humanitarian capacity therefore requires improved mechanisms and standby arrangements that can rapidly mobilize technical expertise. Efforts have been made on the part of the United Nations system to strengthen common services, improve emergency response rosters and make rapid deployment mechanisms more nimble. Several United Nations agencies have also responded swiftly to minimize the impact of landmines on civilian populations and the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

27. However, strengthening humanitarian response capacity also requires that the humanitarian community more easily draw upon the national expertise of countries that have rapid response experience. The United Nations has collaborated with Governments to establish standby arrangements for rapid staff deployment for assessments and for emergency staffing; certain Governments have also initiated standing arrangements for the rapid deployment of staff to augment the surge capacities of United Nations agencies. Such arrangements should be strengthened further to work within — rather than in parallel with — United Nations rapid response mechanisms.

Sectoral capacity

28. Significant capacity gaps exist in water and sanitation, shelter and camp management, and protection, and such weaknesses are consistent across both disasters and emergencies. In some instances, such failings are attributable to gaps in mandate. In other cases, the humanitarian response system lacked the presence, skills and experience to perform required functions. In all cases, such weaknesses have delayed response, prevented adequate coverage and reduced the system's ability to ensure equity in the distribution of aid. There is therefore a need to reinvest in developing and maintaining systemic capacity for humanitarian response by increasing and strengthening professional staffing in key sectors, by improving common logistics and communications services and by forming and supporting strategic partnerships that tap into the large response capacity of NGOs and draw on the existing expertise of local and regional organizations. Because the protection of civilians is a responsibility that lies squarely with States, enhancing the protection of civilians requires that Member States commit to preventing and addressing the

implications of such violence — in the retraining of the national army and police to create a security sector trained in human rights law, in the demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, in the development of programmes to support women's economic empowerment and in the provision of access to medical and psychological services to victims and survivors of sexual violence. In support of these efforts, the humanitarian system must work to fill protection gaps by improving expertise, agreeing to attendant roles and responsibilities and increasing the capacity of regional organizations to act as protection forces.

Financial capacity

29. The way humanitarian crises are funded affects the system's ability to respond promptly, effectively and in a principled and impartial manner. Moreover, timely, adequate and predictable funding improves the Organization's ability further to develop and maintain response capacity where it is currently inadequate. There are many situations where crises develop or escalate rapidly, where a rapid deployment of staff in critical sectors is required or where the needs in underreported countries or sectors may go unnoticed but require substantial amounts of support. In a sudden-onset disaster, flash appeals may be too late in coming and current emergency response mechanisms, such as the Central Emergency Revolving Fund and the Emergency Response Fund, were developed more than a decade ago and may have become inadequate to the scale and speed today's crises require.

30. At the global level, improving financial capacity means (a) enabling an immediate response (e.g. providing start-up funds before pledges become liquid and providing funds when unanticipated developments lead to an increased need for humanitarian activities), (b) introducing a mechanism to ensure equitable funding of crises and of sectors to ensure funding for neglected emergencies and (c) providing funds to build up capacity to address gaps (e.g. protection, camp management).

National and local capacity

31. Building national and local preparedness and response capacity is key to a more effective response effort; engaging national and local actors in the response phase ensures that relief efforts contribute to long-term recovery. In the case of large-scale natural disasters, national and local response teams are often the most effective at carrying out rapid assessments and coordinating the initial response because they can more easily overcome obstacles that beset their international counterparts. In the context of complex emergencies, national ownership and leadership in the post-conflict phase is critical to the consolidation of peace and to building consensus around development priorities, roles, responsibilities and resources. In both emergencies and disasters, partnering with community members will facilitate long-term sustainability.

32. All too often, national and local institutions lack adequate capacity to address such humanitarian crises. When building the capacity of the humanitarian system, attention should be given to mobilizing and supporting existing capacities, knowledge and institutions through the transfer of technology and know-how and through public education. Donors and affected Governments should commit to investing much more in disaster preparedness.

B. Ways forward

33. The United Nations humanitarian response system was designed well over a decade ago and was reformed more than seven years ago. In many areas, it has stood the test of time. However, the complexity of the environment in which we now work, combined with the experiences of the past few years, dictate that we update our systems and strategies and upgrade our mechanisms and tools so that what was developed in the 1990s will be more effective in today's environment.

Humanitarian response review

34. One way forward is to examine the system's core competencies. In light of the high current levels of humanitarian demand, it is evident that there is a critical need to identify those factors that have hindered the speed and effectiveness of humanitarian response, including in the area of protection, and ensure that appropriate steps are taken to improve the timeliness and impact of humanitarian actions.

35. There are also a number of new proposals and initiatives for strengthening humanitarian capacity that might have a far-reaching effect on the humanitarian effort on a worldwide scale. Such proposals should be examined as critical opportunities to strengthen global humanitarian response capacity in a few key areas and should be evaluated in the context of how that may contribute to and improve the emergency response system of the United Nations overall.

36. To this end, the Emergency Relief Coordinator, based on his mandate in resolution 46/182, initiated an independent in-depth system-wide review of humanitarian response capacities. The review will analyse the overall humanitarian response capacities as well as the potential resources available to meet future demands for assistance and protection. The focus of the review will give attention primarily to the capacities of the United Nations, international NGOs and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. This should help achieve a common understanding of both the current response capacity and available expertise and of how the humanitarian system can effectively mobilize and deploy them. In addition, it will identify possible gaps in expertise and resources and recommend measures that need to be taken to address the shortcomings. The results of the review should be available in the summer of 2005.

New partnerships

37. Recent events have also demonstrated key areas where capacity can be strengthened through partnerships. Improved partnerships between humanitarian and development actors would improve the handover from the immediate response to recovery programmes. Partnerships within the system may be necessary to overcome those gaps in assistance — such as protection and camp management in situations involving internally displaced persons — that do not enjoy leadership from any one agency. Partnerships with Governments can serve to help build their own capacity to manage and mitigate humanitarian crises, as well as enhance rapid response capacity and expertise of international structures by providing human, technical and material resources. Partnerships and formal engagement with regional organizations would help boost the system's ability to perform key tasks that are

often beyond the ability of humanitarian agency staff to provide but that benefit the delivery of assistance overall (e.g. security).

38. Whereas up to now the role of the private sector in providing humanitarian assistance has been limited, the tsunami crisis opened up opportunities for this sector to play an important role in the humanitarian field. Increased private sector engagement in humanitarian operations raises coordination questions that should be further evaluated.

IV. Follow-up to humanitarian resolutions and the "organizational aspects" of intergovernmental dialogue

39. The effectiveness of humanitarian work, however, is not simply a matter of capacity; it also depends on the relevance of Member State dialogue, the focus and strength of intergovernmental resolutions and the ability of the United Nations system to "operationalize" such resolutions in terms of activities on the ground.

40. The recognition of this fact prompted Member States during the humanitarian affairs segment of the 2004 session of the Economic and Social Council to request a progress report on three years of Council resolutions on strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (resolutions 2002/32, 2003/5, 2004/50) to monitor follow-up and to better understand where and how resolutions may have had an impact on the humanitarian policy and practice of the United Nations. Subsequently, the General Assembly, in paragraph 4 of its resolution 59/141, emphasized the importance of the discussion of humanitarian policies and activities in the Assembly and in the Economic and Social Council and that those discussions be further revitalized by Member States.

A. Follow-up to humanitarian resolutions of the Economic and Social Council

41. General Assembly resolution 46/182 stipulated that the Secretary-General update Member States annually on humanitarian assistance through the Economic and Social Council. The humanitarian affairs segment of the Council was subsequently established by the Secretary General's reform of 1997 to "give guidance on overall humanitarian issues and coordination" (see A/51/950, para. 193) with a view to improving the management and coherence of United Nations system humanitarian activities. Since then, the humanitarian affairs segment has served as a central discussion forum on thematic humanitarian issues, resulting in two agreed conclusions (1998/1 and 1991/1), two chairman's summaries and three resolutions (2002/32, 2003/5 and 2004/50). During the past three years, these resolutions have broadly focused on the following themes:

- Coordination and response to emergencies and disasters
- Resource mobilization and humanitarian financing
- Transition from relief to development
- Protection and internal displacement
- Sexual exploitation and gender-based violence
- Disaster preparedness and risk reduction
- Gender mainstreaming
- National capacity-building and participation
- Safety and security of humanitarian personnel.

A detailed list of actions taken up in relation to humanitarian resolutions during the past three years can be found in the matrix that has been submitted as a conference room paper as a supplement to the present report (A/60/CRP.1).

B. Impact of humanitarian resolutions

42. The implementation of humanitarian resolutions, however, is only relevant if the actions that result from them lead to concrete improvements in the coordination or delivery of humanitarian assistance at headquarters or on the ground. Though such "impact" is hard to measure, as policy or programming progress is often driven (or constrained) by a variety of factors, sources and inputs, it is possible to evaluate whether and how the discussions and resolutions of the Economic and Social Council have influenced humanitarian policy and practice by analysing the Council's approach to the following thematic issues.

Humanitarian coordination

43. As articulated in resolution 46/182, the coordination of actions and actors in the often confusing aftermath of a natural disaster or the management of the multiplicity of needs in a complex emergency is critical to the overall effectiveness of response. In the context of the transition from relief to development in both post-disaster and post-conflict situations, coordination is also essential to shifting ownership from international to national actors, to ensuring that stop-gap processes are phased out in favour of enduring structures and to guaranteeing that resources are systematically mobilized and equitably applied to meet a range of needs. In past recommendations, the Secretary-General has therefore encouraged States to recognize the need for strengthened coordination mechanisms and management.

44. Economic and Social Council support to strengthening humanitarian coordination, however, remains uneven. While Member States have consistently reaffirmed the lead role of the Emergency Relief Coordinator in humanitarian response, humanitarian resolutions have stopped short of strengthening the resident coordinator/humanitarian coordinator system that extends such leadership to the field. Annual affirmations in the resolutions of the United Nations coordinating role in disaster response have been met instead with the creation of regional initiatives to develop parallel disaster response and coordination structures outside the United Nations system. Economic and Social Council resolutions, however, have rightly emphasized the importance of building regional, national and local capacity to both effectively prepare for, manage and mitigate disasters and to lead the coordination of post-conflict and post-disaster phases. While NGOs have been consistently good at building local and national humanitarian response capacity in a variety of contexts, the United Nations must do much more and in a more systematic manner.

45. As the thematic cornerstone of the Council's humanitarian affairs segment, strengthening the coordination of humanitarian response in the context of disasters and complex emergencies is of primary and central concern. Such concern should be met with more focused intergovernmental attention in the form of support to those coordination mechanisms and structures that enhance the overall performance of the humanitarian system.

Resource mobilization and humanitarian financing

46. Despite generous pledges from donors in response to major crises during the past three years, funding for humanitarian assistance continues to be low, delayed and unevenly applied. The reasons for this are various, but are due, in part, to inconsistencies in the identification and prioritization of needs, the tracking and analysis of aid flows and the way such funds are sourced and disbursed.

47. While such problems had been diagnosed by the United Nations system and by donors, raising such concerns to the Economic and Social Council has contributed to policy progress in this area in substantial ways. Council debates and resolutions helped to reframe the funding agenda by successfully linking humanitarian financing with the effectiveness of assistance. The Council's endorsement of the Good Humanitarian Donorship initiative has helped to broaden the debate outside donor circles, offered policy directives that have encouraged behavioural shifts and prompted discussions within donor countries and among donor groups that have led to improvements, notably to a higher rate of conversion of pledges to cash-in-hand.

48. Economic and Social Council resolutions have also lent critical intergovernmental weight to specific, technical actions towards improving both funding levels and the conditions under which such funding is sourced, allocated and managed. Economic and Social Council attention has helped launch internal processes to find common definitions of humanitarian assistance and to strengthen the analysis and reporting mechanisms for documenting, comparing and presenting needs assessments across emergencies. Council resolutions calling for the strengthening of the consolidated appeals process has helped to support United Nations-donor initiatives to improve the reporting of financial contributions and strengthen the presentation and analysis of funding patterns found therein. Improvements in the financial tracking system continue today with help from PriceWaterhouseCoopers, which has donated 8,000 man-hours to both a forensic analysis of current humanitarian aid flows for the tsunami crisis and to provide technical expertise to the system as a whole.

49. However, Economic and Social Council resolutions have had only a marginal impact on funding patterns in the areas of neglected emergencies, underresourced sectors and funding gaps, particularly for post-disaster recovery. It is in these areas that more support from Member States is needed.

Transition

50. During the past few years, countries emerging from crisis and recovering from natural disasters have required that the Council's humanitarian affairs segment focus not only on addressing enduring life saving needs, but also on identifying ways to help Governments restore authority and the rule of law, rebuild basic infrastructure and build back the livelihoods in what are fragile "transitional" phases.

51. Though the issue of the transition from relief to development had been on the intergovernmental agenda since the early 1990s, progress on it had lost momentum, as discussions tended to focus on United Nations processes, tools and internal concerns. Renewed attention to the issue in the Economic and Social Council during the past three years, which coincided with the need to support work in Afghanistan, has allowed the United Nations to revitalize the transitions discussion by promoting better coordination in transition environments, including with the international

financial institutions, and to shift the debate, refocusing transition priorities to the development of policy and processes aimed to support State ownership and leadership and, in the case of post-disaster transitions, the need to avoid reinforcing risk.

52. Though many positive initiatives have been launched to improve coordination in transitions, the humanitarian affairs segment has not managed to engage the international financial institutions successfully in getting them to relate more coherently to the United Nations humanitarian and development partners. However, significant post-conflict and post-disaster activities are ongoing in many areas of the world and require material, financial and policy support. It remains unclear what direction the humanitarian affairs segment should take with regard to transition.

Protection and internal displacement

53. Civilian victims of conflict are often forced from their homes, denied access to life-saving food, medicine and shelter and may become the primary target of attacks motivated by ethnic or religious hatred, political infighting or the ruthless pursuit of economic interests. Civilians affected by disasters have lost — often in an instant — not only their homes and belongings, but also their social networks and means of economic survival. Protecting and assisting civilian victims of conflict and disasters is therefore critical to restoring the human capital and capacity of a country. Though the primary responsibility for the protection of civilians rests with States, international support is often required, with the consent of national Governments or when the State cannot protect its citizens alone. With an estimated 50 million persons internally displaced by conflicts and disasters worldwide, protecting and assisting internally displaced persons is particularly important to stabilizing affected countries and restoring economic and social life.

54. Despite the fact that Member States have condemned certain armed groups — notably the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone and the Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda — for egregious acts of violence against civilians, both protection and internal displacement remain contentious topics in the Economic and Social Council. Fears of "humanitarian intervention" elsewhere in the United Nations have overshadowed the protection debate.

55. Fundamental to the issue of protection is access, and this is where humanitarian resolutions have had a role to play. By reaffirming the responsibility of all parties to conflict to ensure the safe and unhindered access of the affected community to humanitarian assistance, and by reminding neighbouring States of their responsibility to facilitate the transit of such assistance, the Economic and Social Council has acted as a valuable advocacy tool on behalf of the humanitarian community. While the Council has been instrumental in raising awareness, it has been unable to "operationalize" such principles in the form of actions on the ground. Access continues to be routinely denied by Governments and armed groups in some crises and the Council has been unable to address critical protection needs, such as management of internally displaced persons' camps and securing communities from the threat of sexual violence. Such issues need to be taken as seriously as material relief and require a less contentious intergovernmental approach.

Gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation and abuse

56. Sexual and gender-based violence continues to be used as a weapon of war as women, girls — and some men and boys — are beaten, raped and humiliated as a means of asserting power, breaking community ties and degrading human dignity. The prevailing culture of impunity in many situations further reinforces these developments. Survivors and victims of such attacks often suffer from serious health consequences and rejection by the community; economic exclusion and social constraints often dissuade victims from seeking or receiving help. Sexual exploitation and abuse of civilians by peacekeeping or humanitarian personnel in crises is also an issue of grave concern, but one where allegations of such conduct have prompted action by the United Nations and the humanitarian community.

57. The Economic and Social Council has consistently raised these issues, although with varying impact. Though the Council called upon States to adopt preventive measures and effective responses to sexual violence and to ensure that those responsible are brought to justice, such a directive has not translated into either preventive or punitive measures on the part of States. The role the Council has played on the issue of sexual exploitation on the part of United Nations humanitarian and military staff, however, has been a positive one, reinforcing the specific actions already under way and lending support and momentum to important policy processes. For example, when efforts were under way to implement the standards developed by the Inter-Agency Standing Committee, it was important to have the strong language in Council resolutions when developing the Secretary-General's bulletin on special measures against sexual exploitation and abuse and when following up with the United Nations system and with NGOs on adopting standards developed by the Standing Committee as part of their own codes of conduct.

58. The use of sexual and gender-based violence as a weapon of war is a worrying, enduring problem that should remain firmly on the intergovernmental humanitarian agenda. Ending the culture of impunity that allows such violence to occur should be consistently reinforced by Member States. There is also a need for the more determined engagement of Government with civil society and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to help societies mitigate the effects of such violence, including in the field of health education. Keeping the issue of sexual exploitation of humanitarian staff on the agenda of the Economic and Social Council will continue to be important in continually reinforcing ongoing efforts being undertaken by the system.

Disaster response and risk reduction

59. The intensity, frequency and geographic scale of today's disasters require extraordinary levels of coordination to manage the proliferation of relief actors and actions and attend to a wide range of needs and circumstances. Effective management of disasters also requires consideration of risk and vulnerability and investment in risk reduction activities as part of response, recovery and development plans.

60. Economic and Social Council resolutions have been instrumental in promoting specific operational initiatives to improve the speed and effectiveness of international disaster assistance by calling for the strengthening of international urban search and rescue and, together with the efforts of such other organizations as

the International Telecommunication Union and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), by consistently encouraging States to ratify or accede to the Tampere Convention on the Provision of Telecommunication Resources for Disaster Mitigation and Relief Operations. These efforts proved successful, as membership in the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group has broadened and the Tampere Convention entered into force in January 2005. The Council has also supported the work being led by IFRC on the development of "guiding principles and practice on international disaster response".

61. The Economic and Social Council has also been instrumental in lending strategic policy support to humanitarian issues taken up in the General Assembly. While disaster reduction is an issue also taken up in the Assembly each year, the Council has been able to reinforce risk reduction policy messages by asking the Assembly to give priority to integrating disaster risk reduction strategies into relevant legal, policy and planning instruments. This has been done mainly through the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, reinforced by the Hyogo Framework for Action, agreed upon at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction, held in Japan in January 2005.

Observations

62. The foregoing analysis of the role of the Economic and Social Council on a variety of humanitarian policy issues suggests that policy progress in some areas is easier than in others. Most importantly, it suggests that the Council has a role to play when its reporting, discussions and resolutions are clear in their intent and focus. Below are some general observations about the role of the Council and its impact on humanitarian coordination and assistance based on its performance during the past three years.

Broad policy dialogue

63. The value of the Economic and Social Council with respect to humanitarian assistance and coordination continues to be its inclusiveness as an annual platform that brings together United Nations agencies, NGOs and donor and recipient countries on issues that constrain humanitarian work. Though the Council does not serve to identify policy problems and seldom initiates policy initiatives, it has had a role to play in broadening policy debates when such issues require more broadly reflective perspectives, in reframing policy agendas when issues have been derailed and in bringing policy coherence to those areas that have fallen prey to internal debate. The codification of such discussions in the form of Council resolutions helps then to put intergovernmental weight behind critical policy priorities and activities, formalizing, endorsing and reinforcing actions already under way.

Progress and follow-up

64. The Economic and Social Council has also served as a means for tracking progress on humanitarian policy issues. Through annual reports of the Secretary-General, the United Nations system and its humanitarian partners report back to Member States on actions taken throughout the year, highlighting emerging challenges and trends. Through the adoption of humanitarian resolutions, Member States collectively endorse the policy priorities for the coming year. While such an exercise has intrinsic value, the process might be improved by a more strategic

focus of issues of concern in the reporting and in the resolutions, a more consistent approach to the way humanitarian discussions are introduced and shaped and a clearer division of labour between the work done in the Council and in the General Assembly to avoid overlap in reporting and resolution requirements. Though the foregoing examples demonstrate that it is easier to make policy progress in some areas than in others, where requested actions in resolutions are more specific, they work better. Moreover, the Council's effectiveness as a monitoring tool is contingent on its ability to promote accountability among all parts of the humanitarian system, including Member States, though the foregoing examples suggest it has been less successful in this regard. The Council would therefore benefit from broader Member State participation, particularly from those countries that are partners in or recipients of humanitarian assistance.

Promoting respect for humanitarian principles and law

65. Where Economic and Social Council resolutions have been less successful is in their ability to promote respect for humanitarian principles. While the Council's humanitarian resolutions routinely reaffirm humanitarian principles, the responsibilities of States with regard to international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law and key humanitarian guidelines and norms, the Council has failed to generate broad respect for such principles or promote compliance with them in terms of actions on the ground. Reinforcing the normative base is an important component of strengthening the humanitarian agenda that may require attention from a broader constituency than the Council can provide.

C. "Organizational aspects" of intergovernmental dialogue

66. The September summit meeting of Member States provides an important opportunity for clarifying, in particular, the respective roles that the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council should play with respect to humanitarian action and coordination. Such discussions might benefit from the following observations gleaned from experience with intergovernmental debates on humanitarian issues.

Making more strategic use of the Economic and Social Council would strengthen the humanitarian policy agenda

67. As demonstrated above, the Economic and Social Council is an important policy mechanism that would benefit from a more strategic vision and approach. Such an improved approach might (a) better define the role of the Economic and Social Council vis-à-vis that of the General Assembly and the Security Council with regard to humanitarian issues, (b) clearly and systematically identify and address gaps in the system and improve, rather than constrain, humanitarian action and (c) promote broad ownership of and accountability to issues of common concern. In particular, proposals to differentiate the work of the Economic and Social Council as a specialist technical development/humanitarian body from the substantive normative work of the Assembly would help in this regard.

The point of departure must always be what happens on the ground

68. Economic and Social Council discussions and resolutions are most effective when they are driven by issues and challenges arising from the field. The requests in Council resolutions that achieved the greatest impact were those that were rooted in and driven by field events and that had enough traction at the operational/agency and field levels to be brought forward. In this regard, concrete progress has been made in areas such as sexual exploitation and abuse, where critical thinking on a field imperative was formalized by the Council and then put to practical use. Similarly, the Council helped reinvigorate much-needed discussions on transitions, allowing the United Nations system, together with affected States, to "operationalize" some of the policy ideas into programming tools at the disposal of the entire system.

Put humanity first

69. It is in the name of our collective concern for the principle of "humanity" that the United Nations system — including its intergovernmental bodies — can make positive progress towards achieving humanitarian goals. However, this can only be achieved by reaffirming the role of the United Nations humanitarian community as acting on behalf of the needs of the vulnerable, and not the politics of States. Intergovernmental debates on humanitarian issues would be best served by a more broadly reflective agenda that allows States to move beyond self-interested positions and give in-depth consideration to those issues and events that challenge the Organization's ability effectively and responsibly to reduce pain and suffering on a worldwide scale.

V. Multidimensional missions

70. The past two years have seen an increase in the size, scale and scope of multidimensional peacekeeping operations. These developments have also resulted in the need to clarify relationships between the humanitarian, development, political and military elements of missions to better ensure that integration promotes coherence of approach when the various elements of the mission are mutually supportive and reinforcing.

71. Many humanitarian partners remain concerned that the nature and design of "integrated missions" have, in some cases, had an adverse impact on humanitarian operations. Specific concerns exist about the confusion of roles between military and humanitarian actors where quick-impact projects and "hearts and minds" campaigns take place alongside humanitarian programmes. Many non-United Nations humanitarian partner organizations have also been opposed to humanitarian coordination being fully integrated into peacebuilding and peacekeeping missions, fearing that this will have an adverse impact on their ability to assist those in need in accordance with humanitarian principles.

72. A recent independent study commissioned by the expanded Core Group of the Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs entitled, Report on Integrated Missions: Practical Perspectives and Recommendations, identified a number of ways that the United Nations could better harness its resources to respond more efficiently and comprehensively in peacekeeping and peacebuilding situations and offered the following conclusions:

- In many circumstances, especially where there is no clear-cut distinction between active conflict and post-conflict, humanitarian actors may need uninterrupted access to all areas and communications with all actors. Therefore, mission mandates need to recognize humanitarian principles and mission design must be sufficiently flexible to ensure that the humanitarian operating environment is protected and allow for the incorporation of relevant aspects of United Nations country team capacities into operational plans.

- Humanitarian principles could be more actively safeguarded by enabling the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General responsible for humanitarian and development activities to review quick-impact projects and hearts and minds activities to ensure that they did not conflict with humanitarian activities.

- In general terms, the study recognizes the need for an agreed definition of integrated missions to better define when and how multidimensional peacekeeping operations should be applied.

- The planning and design processes are critical to effective harmonious integration and need to draw more effectively on the experience of the pre-existing United Nations country team.

- The human rights system of the United Nations is also often called upon to play the dual roles of supporting transitional processes as well as monitoring and reporting on overall human rights developments. Mission structures must also be sufficiently flexible to enable human rights actors to meet their principled and mandate-based obligations while simultaneously supporting transitional processes.

- The study also recognizes that multidimensional peacekeeping operations operate in rapidly changing political environments. For this reason, it is important to ensure regular review of both mission mandates and the appropriateness of mission structures to deliver on the agreed objectives. The regular review of major peacekeeping operations is a proposed function for the Peacebuilding Commission.

VI. Update on the use of the Central Emergency Revolving Fund and emergency cash grants

73. The Central Emergency Revolving Fund (CERF) is a cash-flow mechanism under the authority of the Under-Secretary-General/Emergency Relief Coordinator and administered by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to bridge the gap between needs and available funding throughout a crisis. Funded by donors, CERF monies are released to United Nations operational agencies at the outset of a crisis and sometimes during later phases to assist agencies with cash-flow problems before donor contributions become available. The mechanism requires that agencies pay back the loan within one year. Disbursement is usually within four to five days and loans are normally repaid within six months.

74. The Fund, which was created by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/182, was originally intended for use during the initial phase of complex emergencies. Its use was later expanded by the Assembly in its resolution 56/107 to

include disaster response, to address new requirements in the context of protracted emergencies and to support emergency staff safety arrangements for United Nations and associated personnel. Since its establishment in 1992, 18 United Nations agencies have accessed the fund 201 times and borrowed more than $318 million, of which $306.7 million has been reimbursed. Since June 2004, $20.9 million has been borrowed and $9.4 million reimbursed, primarily to respond to the crisis in the Sudan.

75. In the immediate aftermath of a natural disaster, the United Nations can provide emergency cash grants to countries affected by natural disasters. These grants are particularly effective because they can be used rapidly for the local purchase and delivery of life-saving relief supplies. Humanitarian crises during the past several years demonstrated that the $50,000 ceiling, which was authorized by the General Assembly in its resolution 38/202 of 20 December 1983, was insufficient to be effective in the absence of alternative means of immediate relief. In light of this observation, Member States, through Economic and Social Council resolution 2004/50, recommended that the General Assembly authorize the increase of this ceiling. Taking their lead from the Council, Member States, in Assembly resolution 59/141, decided to raise the limit of an emergency cash grant to $100,000 per country, per disaster, within the existing resources available from the regular budget.

Expanded CERF (e-CERF)

76. Though CERF and the emergency cash grant system remain important standby resource mechanisms in times of severe emergencies, consistent and timely response to humanitarian emergencies and disasters requires more robust financial mechanisms that can ensure adequate, predictable and flexible funding to enable an immediate response, provide funding for neglected emergencies and address sectoral gaps.

77. Expanding the scope and use of the current CERF will address the problems of slow and inequitable response. An expanded CERF (e-CERF) would build on the existing revolving fund mechanism to include a loan capacity and a grant component, both of which could be used for (a) immediate need (e.g. sudden onset natural disaster or conflict), (b) unanticipated costs, or (c) funding for neglected emergencies. More stringent criteria would be established for approval of grants vs. loans and a detailed mechanism for approval should be elaborated and approved by the General Assembly. A funding conference will be held for the e-CERF annually or every two years.

VII. Recommendations

Strengthen humanitarian response capacity by broadening the capacity base and improving expertise and performance benchmarks

78. There is significant deployable capacity within the system. However, such capacity is unpredictable, thin and relies on too small a core. In the event of a major crisis, the humanitarian system is often unable to pull together the right combination of expertise within the right time frame and, when doing so, will rely on the same group of people. Deployable capacity does — or did — exist, however, in countries where there are high levels of established humanitarian need, such as those in

Africa. Strengthening the capacity of the humanitarian system requires both expanding the mechanisms that can ensure appropriate and predictable deployment and tapping into existing skills and expertise to "thicken" its deployable base.

79. Significant capacity gaps exist in the areas of water and sanitation, shelter and camp management and protection. Such patterns of performance are consistent across both disasters and emergencies and are caused by a variety of factors, including limited deployable expertise and lack of predictable funding. Identifying the requisite skills and developing and funding a "preparedness capacity" in the areas of water and sanitation, health and, particularly, camp management, in crises, would help ensure better coverage in these sectors. Sectoral performance will also be improved by establishing clearer performance targets and indicators, such as were established to positive effect in the Sudan by the United Nations country team responding to the Sudan real-time evaluation.

- Expand and sustain essential common humanitarian services so that they can be predictably deployed and with the right combination of skills.
- Systematically engage to build and re-establish regional, national and local humanitarian response capacities so that the humanitarian system has immediate access to deployable resources in areas where humanitarian needs are demonstrably high, particularly in Africa.
- Identify and/or develop specialist technical expertise for major crises in water and sanitation, shelter and camp management and protection, and request the humanitarian response review to recommend the best mechanisms for achieving this objective.
- Establish finance mechanisms at the country level that ensure that critical gaps are immediately addressed.
- In sudden-onset disasters, establish performance benchmarks for the first four weeks. In complex crises, establish benchmarks from the outset of response.

Improve coordination by making more efficient use of the resources we have

80. The tsunami crisis demonstrated that there are considerable assets within the humanitarian system that would benefit from improved standby and coordination mechanisms and many proposals and initiatives have been put forth in this regard. However, such assets would be more efficiently used — and the humanitarian benefits would be potentially greater — if they are deployed under or coordinated with the United Nations and not run under their own steam. The United Nations should improve its ability to make the best use of humanitarian capacity at different levels, including regional capacity, by working out procedures where they can be deployed in a consistent manner to the benefit of affected populations. In addition, clearer and more formal coordination procedures and agreements with the military are essential.

- Establish improved mechanisms for the deployment of regional standby capacities under the leadership of the United Nations, such as through more formal agreements with regional organizations and the development of standard operating procedures for their deployment and coordination processes.

- Strengthen the procedures for the use and coordination of military assets and develop more systematic links with major providers.

- Strengthen support to resident/humanitarian coordinators and to United Nations country teams.

Strengthen financial mechanisms by expanding the use of CERF

81. The current configuration of CERF as a revolving fund remains a useful — but limited — financial instrument for humanitarian response. Though in the past it has provided temporary liquidity to humanitarian agencies, its current configuration does not allow it adequately to fill rapidly rising needs in the initial phases of an emergency, before an appeal is launched, and contributes to delays in initial response.

- Expand CERF (e-CERF) to include a grant facility component based on voluntary contributions as an advance of funds normally contributed through the consolidated appeals process, managed under the authority of the Secretary-General, the primary purposes of which are:

  – Developing and sustaining international, regional and national preparedness and standby capacity

  – Facilitating rapid deployment costs

  – Covering unanticipated increased need for essential humanitarian services

  – Addressing core needs in underfunded emergencies.

Preserve humanitarian space in integrated missions

82. The need to observe humanitarian principles in peacebuilding missions should be recognized in all mission mandates.

- Develop better mission guidelines and terms of reference so that the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General responsible for humanitarian and development activities has a clear responsibility for maintaining oversight over all quick-impact projects and hearts and minds activities that could have an impact on humanitarian action.

- As long as there is a humanitarian function, the official responsible for humanitarian coordination and his or her support office should reflect the interests of the wider humanitarian community; this may require that the coordination office is located separately from the main mission office to facilitate access for humanitarian actors.

- The humanitarian elements of the United Nations need to be more consistently engaged at the earliest stages of mission planning and design. This will require the establishment of a dedicated capacity drawn from United Nations humanitarian actors to work with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.